



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 29, 2009

Contact: Jan Kemp, ext. 2381
Joelle McGinnis, ext. 2380
630-241-6800
www.illinoistollway.com

ILLINOIS TOLLWAY SUSPENDS CONSTRUCTION LANE CLOSURES OVER FOURTH OF JULY HOLIDAY WEEKEND

Tollway Urges Motorists to Slow Down, Save Lives in Construction Work Zones

DOWNERS GROVE, Ill. – The Illinois Tollway is suspending temporary lane closures for construction projects over the Fourth of July holiday weekend from noon on Thursday, July 2, until 9 a.m. on Monday, July 6, but wants motorists to be aware of major traffic shifts that are in place in construction work zones throughout the system. Roadway Rebuild & Widen Projects underway will be completed systemwide this year as part of the Illinois Tollway's \$6.3 billion Congestion-Relief Program.

Weekend holiday travelers will benefit from newly opened ramps at two major interchanges on the north Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294). The Half Day Road (IL Route 22) entrance ramp to southbound I-294 and northbound exit ramp are now open and at the Grand Avenue (IL Route 132) Interchange, bridge work will be completed and the southbound I-294 exit ramp to eastbound Grand Avenue will reopen to traffic prior to the holiday weekend.

Traffic shifts and work zone traffic configurations with Express and Local Lanes are in place on the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294), Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), and on the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88). Drivers should follow roadway signs and be aware that Express Lanes may bypass local exits due to ongoing construction. Slower speeds may be necessary due to shifts in traffic, narrow lanes or no

shoulders. Motorists must still obey the construction zone speed limit of 45 m.p.h. as posted, even if no workers are present.

As drivers prepare to travel for Memorial Day celebrations, the Illinois Tollway encourages customers to *Know Before You Go!* – to make trips faster, easier and convenient. Most daily commuters know what to expect on their frequently traveled routes, but many times leisure travelers hit the road less-prepared. Occasional travelers often forget about construction until they are in traffic. By checking out www.illinoistollway.com before traveling, drivers can get current traffic and construction information, make sure they have funds in their I-PASS accounts and even plan to stop for gas or snacks at an Illinois Tollway Oasis along the way.

Tollway Construction Zones

Major construction areas where drivers should plan for slower traffic during the holiday include:

Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80)

North Tri-State

Traffic is shifted into a construction Express Lane configuration between Grand Avenue (IL Route 132) and Half Day Road (IL Route 22) and between Lake Cook Road and Dempster Street, with one northbound lane of traffic traveling in an Express Lane on the southbound side of the road in order to keep three lanes open during construction. Two Local Lanes are shifted to the left on the northbound side of the road. Local Lane traffic will have access to all exits. **The next available exit from the Express Lanes is Rosecrans Road (IL Route 173), however access to Local Lanes is provided in advance of the following exits:**

- Lake Cook Road traffic is directed to exit out of the Express Lanes and into the Local Lanes just north of Sanders Road.
- Rockland Road (IL Route 176) and Buckley Road (IL Route 137) traffic is directed to exit out of the Express Lanes and into the Local Lanes just north of IL Route 60.
- Grand Avenue (IL Route 132) traffic is directed to exit out of the Express Lanes and into the Local Lanes just north of Belvidere Road.

Traffic planning to exit at Half Day Road (IL Route 22), Townline Road (IL Route 60), and Belvidere Road (IL Route 120) must stay in the Local Lanes.

Other North Tri-State Tollway construction work includes:

- On the Half Day Road (IL Route 22) Bridge over the Tollway one lane of traffic in each direction on Half Day Road is being maintained on the newly constructed eastbound bridge.

Central Tri-State

Southbound traffic between Touhy Avenue and Balmoral Avenue is shifted into an Express Lane configuration with one southbound lane traveling on the northbound side of the median, and two Local Lanes traveling on the southbound side to keep three lanes open during construction. **Express Lane traffic can not exit until Irving Park Road. Traffic exiting at the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) Interchange must stay in the Local Lanes.**

Other Central Tri-State Tollway construction work includes:

- The entrance ramp to southbound I-294 from westbound Touhy Avenue is closed for ramp reconstruction work. A detour is in place directing traffic to continue west on Touhy Avenue to Des Plaines River Road, then south to reach I-294.
- A traffic split will be in place in the northbound lanes between Wolf Road and the O'Hare Oasis for bridge work, with one lane of traffic traveling on the left shoulder and three

remaining lanes shifted to the right with a work zone in the center. Traffic on the left side of the split will not have access to exit at the I-90/River Road Interchange or the O'Hare Oasis.

South Tri-State

Northbound traffic is shifted into two Express Lanes on the southbound side of the road from 159th Street to 95th Street, with one Local Lane is available on the northbound side of the road to keep three lanes open during construction. Traffic in the Local Lane has access to all exits. **The next available exit in the Express Lanes is at 75th Street/Willow Springs Road.** Drivers exiting at 159th Street must stay in the Local Lane. **Traffic exiting at 127th Street/Cicero Avenue and at 95th Street is directed out of the Express Lanes just south of 127th Street.**

- The eastbound 95th Street entrance ramp to northbound I-294 is closed for reconstruction. The posted detour route directs traffic to continue east on 95th Street to the Harlem Avenue interchange where motorists can take the northbound Harlem Avenue ramp, then follow the southbound Harlem Avenue ramp to westbound 95th Street to reach the northbound I-294 entrance ramp.

Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88)

Construction work zones are in place on the east end of I-88 from York Road to Finley Road to maintain three lanes of traffic in both directions.

- Between IL Route 83 and 22nd Street all traffic is shifted onto the westbound side, with three lanes open in both directions.
- Between Finley Road and IL Route 83 traffic is shifted into a construction Express Lane configuration, with one eastbound lane of traffic traveling in an Express Lane on the westbound side of the road in order to keep three lanes open during construction. Two Local Lanes are traveling on the eastbound side of the road. Traffic in the Local Lanes

has access to all exits. **The next available exit from the Express Lanes is the Tri-State Tollway (I-294). Traffic using the Express Lanes will not have access to exit at I-355 North, Highland Avenue, or Midwest Road, and will not have access to the cash lanes at the Meyers Road Toll Plaza.**

Construction zones are also in place to the west, traffic in both directions between Farnsworth Avenue and the EJ&E Railroad is shifted to the left for a new interchange project at Eola Road. Farther to the west, all traffic between Orchard Road and the Aurora Toll Plaza is shifted onto the eastbound side of the road, with two lanes open in both directions.

- IL Route 31 entrance ramp to westbound I-88 is closed to traffic through fall 2009. The posted detour directs traffic to continue south on IL Route 31 to Indian Trail Road, west on Indian Trail Road to Orchard Road, and north on Orchard Road to reach the westbound entrance to I-88.

Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355)

Southbound traffic between Ogden Avenue and 75th Street is shifted to the left with a work zone on the right for a resurface and widen project. Northbound traffic also is shifted to the left at the 75th Street Interchange.

Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90)

All traffic between the Kishwaukee River and the South Beloit Toll Plaza is shifted onto the eastbound side of the road in order to maintain two lanes in each direction.

- The ramp from westbound I-90 to southbound I-39/U.S. 51 is closed for work to rebuild and reconfigure the Cherry Valley Interchange at I-90/I-39. A posted detour directs traffic from westbound I-90 to a new exit ramp at Irene Road to reach westbound U.S. 20, which allows drivers to travel 3.5 miles to reach the I-39 Interchange. To reach the

Chicago/Rockford International Airport and City of Freeport, drivers should use the Irene Road detour to reach westbound U.S. 20.

Illinois State Police District 15 Out in Force and Work Zone Speed Limit in Effect

Illinois State Police District 15 will be out in force patrolling the Illinois Tollway system throughout the holiday weekend. State Troopers will be conducting construction zone speed enforcement details and roadside safety checks.

A 45 m.p.h. speed limit is in effect 24/7 in all construction zones and drivers should continue to watch for changing traffic patterns and use caution, especially when workers are present. The minimum fine for speeding in a work zone is \$375, whether there are workers present or not. Posted signs advise motorists of a \$10,000 fine and 14-year jail sentence for hitting a roadway worker.

Know Before You Go

The Tollway offers a variety of ways for drivers to get the latest information on construction and traffic on our roads.

- **www.illinoistollway.com** – Construction Section – for details by road
- **1-800-TOLL-FYI** – daily lane closure info
- **Roadway and electronic signs**
- **www.gcmtravel.com** – travel times
- **Sign up for E-mail updates**
 - Up-to-the-minute traffic by road – www.nbcchicago.com
 - Construction eNewsletter – www.illinoistollway.com

About the Illinois Tollway

The Illinois Tollway maintains and operates 286 miles of interstate tollways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans

Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) and the Tri-State Tollway (I-94, I-294, I-80/I-294). In 2005 the Tollway kicked off its Congestion-Relief Program, *Open Roads for a Faster Future*, which will reduce travel times by rebuilding/restoring nearly all of the system, adding lanes to many miles of existing roads, converting 20 mainline toll plazas to barrier-free Open Road Tolling, and extending I-355 south to I-80 in Will County. ***Get I-PASS & Get Going!***

###