

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Dangerous Weather Force Road Closures Statewide; Motorists Still Urged to Stay Off Roads in Some Areas**

*Black Ice a Major Concern Due to Freezing Cold Temperatures*

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) announced today that motorists should be mindful of dangerous road conditions and black ice on roadways in areas throughout Illinois. Motorists are also encouraged to stay home and avoid travel until roads are safe. For those who have to travel, check [www.gettingaroundillinois.com](http://www.gettingaroundillinois.com) for the latest road closures and road conditions. Currently, dozens of Illinois roads statewide are closed due to snow and ice. The severe weather has also encouraged Amtrak to cancel a number of state supported trains. To find out if your train was cancelled, visit [www.Amtrak.com](http://www.Amtrak.com) or call 1-800-USA-RAIL.

IDOT winter weather crews will continue to be on the job as necessary to plow and salt to help ensure roads are clear and passable. The majority of Illinois roads remain snow and ice covered, making travel extremely dangerous.

Preliminary reports show that Winter Storm Ion produced up to a foot of snow in some areas across the state. The National Weather Service forecasts dangerously cold temperatures with strong winds to cause extensive blowing and drifting snow throughout the day. Historic cold temperatures are expected throughout Illinois for the next several days with temperatures ranging from 5 to 16 below zero, wind chills ranging from 40 to 45 degrees below zero and gusty west winds of 20 to 30 mph through Tuesday.

“With the freezing temperatures, black ice is a major concern,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Ann L. Schneider. “Black ice forms on roads that appear clear and the unseen ice can be treacherous. We encourage motorists, if they must travel, to take it slow when approaching intersections, off-ramps, bridges and shady areas – all are prone to black ice. Motorists should use extreme caution, buckle up, avoid distractions and check [www.gettingaroundillinois.com](http://www.gettingaroundillinois.com) for the latest winter road conditions and road closures.

Currently, IDOT has 1,755 trucks assigned to snow duty across the state, and nearly 3,700 full- and part-time employees available to help ensure roads are clear and passable. IDOT will continue to monitor the weather and plan accordingly.

Drivers are reminded to exercise caution when snow and ice affect roadways, and IDOT advises travel only when absolutely necessary during winter storms or when temperatures are extremely low. During the severely cold weather expected, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security advises that Illinois residents limit exposure to cold temperatures, dress in layers, check in on others who may need additional assistance, keep vehicles in good repair, and bring pets indoors.

For a list of warming centers in Illinois, visit <http://www2.illinois.gov/KeepWarm/Pages/warmingcenter.aspx>.

Other safety tips to remember:

- Don't crowd the plow – a snow plow operator's field of vision is restricted. You may see them, but they may not see you.
- Allow extra time for travel during the winter months.
- Watch out for black ice on roads that appear clear but can be treacherous. Take it slow when approaching intersections, off-ramps, bridges and shady areas - all are prone to black ice, which is often invisible.
- Always keep your gas tank at least two-thirds full to help prevent the vehicle's fuel line from freezing.

- Do not travel during bad weather unless absolutely necessary - if you do have to make a trip, check the forecast and make sure someone is aware of your travel route.
- Always carry an emergency car care kit that contains jumper cables, flares or reflectors, windshield washer fluid, a small ice scraper, traction material, blankets, non-perishable food and a first aid kit.
- Carry a cell phone and dial \*999 for roadway assistance.
- Always wear a safety belt.
- Motorists are urged to check travel conditions before any trip. You can get road condition information by calling 1-800-452-IDOT (4368), Illinois Tollway information by calling 1-800-TOLL-FYI or online at [www.gettingaroundillinois.com](http://www.gettingaroundillinois.com) and click on the "winter road conditions" icon.