



State of Illinois
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Law Enforcement, IDOT Make Final Push to Save Lives in 2014, Roadside Safety Checks Planned Over Holidays

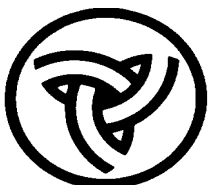
New Episode of "The Driving Dead" Premieres Friday as Holiday Travelers are Reminded to Drive Sober and Buckle Up

SPRINGFIELD – A final, end-of-the-year push begins today to lead Illinois to far fewer motor vehicle fatalities than last year and the lowest annual fatality totals since 2009. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Illinois State Police (ISP) and more than 230 law enforcement agencies across the state are participating in this comprehensive effort to save lives on Illinois roads at a time of year that can be one of the most deadly.

The enforcement crackdown will coincide with the premiere of the latest episode of IDOT'S website series "The Driving Dead", which will be available beginning Dec.19 at TheDrivingDeadSeries.com. The first video in the series, featuring Michael Rooker from the popular TV show "The Walking Dead" and the smash hit movie "Guardians of the Galaxy," was unveiled this summer and has received more than 640,000 views on YouTube.

The videos show the zombie-filled adventures of Rooker and other characters, who find themselves in situations depicting the dangers of driving impaired and not buckling up. You can connect with "The Driving Dead" on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/IDOT), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/IDOT) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/IDOT) for up-to-date news and behind-the-scenes looks at the series.

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The statewide enforcement effort also features the familiar messages of “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” and “Click It or Ticket” to remind motorists of the consequences of bad driving behavior. Holiday motorists can expect hundreds more roadside safety checks, seat belt enforcement zones and other police saturation patrols looking for impaired drivers and seat belt law violators from now through Jan. 1.

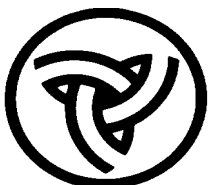
In 1920, the first year motor vehicle fatalities were recorded, 728 people died on Illinois roads. In that year, vehicle-miles traveled totaled an estimated 3.46 billion miles. Just two years later, annual fatalities already increased to more than 1,000. Nearly a century later, annual fatalities again fell below 1,000, even though annual vehicle-miles traveled increased 30-fold in that time to 105 billion each year. In 1920, Illinois’ annual motor vehicle fatality rate was 21.03 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled. In 2013, that rate was 0.94.

Illinois has an opportunity in 2014 to make even more history by recording one of its lowest annual motor vehicle fatality totals ever, with a chance at achieving an all-time, modern-day low. As of December 17, 2014, 878 people have lost their lives on Illinois roads, which is 78 lower than the same timeframe in 2013.

During the 2013 Christmas holiday (6 p.m. Dec. 24 to 11:59 p.m. Dec.25), two people were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in Illinois. Both fatalities involved a drinking driver. Over the last five years in Illinois (2009-2013), 38 fatalities occurred in Illinois during Christmas, 11 of which (29 percent) involved a drinking driver.

To see the latest information on motor-vehicle fatalities, visit <http://apps.dot.illinois.gov/FatalCrash/Home/CrashData>.

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