



## Chicago Considering New Suite of Cameras



Cars use the bus-only turn lane to go around a stopped taxicab that is blocking the right turn lane. Footage source: CBS Chicago

A new strategy to reduce traffic crashes and roadway disruptions in Chicago is being considered. The city wants to tackle the common problem of vehicles blocking busy intersections by having cameras monitor problematic intersections. However, in order to surveil the intersections, new legislation must be passed to allow traffic enforce-

ment cameras to operate for this purpose.

Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld claimed that automated traffic cameras to catch intersection blockers will help Chicago law enforcement focus their officers on more urgent problems that occur across the city. When vehicles block an intersection, other vehicles are unable to cross, perpetuating congestion.

Commuters are concerned that the cameras are just another excuse for the city to attain revenue. These concerns are reminiscent of the what drivers thought of red-light cameras. In fact, while one study claimed to observe a 10 percent decrease in injury crashes due to red-light cameras, another study reported that many of the locations where red-light cameras were installed did not have any crashes before and after cameras were installed.

Source: [CBS Local](#), [Chicago Tribune](#).

## Unexpected Winter Road Hazards

Road hazards related to winter weather are not limited to snow or ice on the roadways. Additional hazards can jeopardize the safety of roadways throughout the season.

For example, the post-Thanksgiving blizzard brought slushy ice to



Snow obscures traffic signals in the Chicago area.

Image source: Ed Curran/Twitter

the northern half of Illinois, caking traffic lights with coatings of snow so thick that drivers found difficulty in identifying whether the light was red or green. The snow-covered traffic lights were not a problem prior, when incandescent light bulbs

kept the lights warm enough. But the new LED-fitted traffic lights, although affordable and energy-efficient, do not produce any heat.

Meanwhile, several roads in downtown Chicago had to close for a day because ice was falling from the Willis Tower and the John Hancock Center. Videos of pieces of snow and ice falling from the John Hancock Center onto the adjacent sidewalk along Michigan Ave surfaced on social media.

Source: [Patch](#).



**KAI FUNAHASHI**  
TRAFFIC INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

**PRIMARY AUTHOR AND EDITOR**  
**TRAFFIC SAFETY NEWSLETTER**

Statewide Terrorism & Intelligence Center  
2200 South Dirksen Parkway  
Springfield, IL 62703

(217) 524-0323

[Kai\\_Funahashi@isp.state.il.us](mailto:Kai_Funahashi@isp.state.il.us)

### Last Month's Traffic Digest November, 2018

Fatal Crashes: **75\***  
**5 more** than normal†

Total fatalities: **82\***  
**5 more** than normal†

\* Provisional, subject to change  
Source: IDOT

† Based on 2012–16 five-year means

### NEWS THIS MONTH...

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## IDOT Calls for Citizens' Feedback

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is calling all drivers to give feedback on the quality of Illinois highways, the level of investment towards public transportation, and other roadway-related topics for their annual Illinois Traveler Opinion survey.

This year marks the 18th survey since IDOT first began calling for feedback through Illinois Traveler Opinion. The survey is developed with the help of the University of Illinois Springfield.

IDOT Secretary Randy Blankenhorn states that "as the transportation hub of North America, the viability of our system deeply impacts state and national commerce and provides safe and economic travel for Illinois residents. Your opinion matters."

The online survey is available at [go.uis.edu/travelersurvey](http://go.uis.edu/travelersurvey).

Source: [ABC7 Chicago](#), [IDOT](#).



Stop for  
school buses!

## Utah to Tighten Legal DUI Threshold

Utah's DUI legal threshold will decrease from the nationally-recognized .08 percent blood alcohol content (BAC) to .05 percent. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) has long advocated for lower BAC limits, but this new measure makes Utah the first and only state so far to stray from the national standard and enforce a stricter DUI threshold.

The Beehive State passed the new DUI measure in March 2017, but the new law is not effective until December 30, 2018. This year-and-a-half window allows the law enforcement to raise awareness to the public and train sworn officers to work with the new measure.

Legislators who back the stricter limit believe that decreased BAC will directly be able to lower traffic fatality rates. In fact, a study by the University of Chicago and the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation reported that alcohol-related fatal crashes were 11 percent lower when the BAC limit decreased

from .08 to .05 or less.

However, the decrease also gained some criticism. Legislators opposed to the bill claim that the decrease will make it easier for citizens to rack up a criminal record. Responsible drinkers are worried that the new law will affect their ability to enjoy their favorite cocktail. Restaurant owners are also afraid that fewer customers will drink and that the demand for alcoholic beverages will drop. But proponents rebuked these arguments, emphasizing that the new DUI measure is to ensure safe driving environments. With an increased demand for ride-sharing services in the past decade, legislators are confident that drinking habits will not change.

According to the Western Australia Police Force, the average man will reach and sustain .05 BAC after two drinks within an hour and continuing with at least one drink per hour thereafter.

Source: [PEW](#), [NBC](#).

## Three Deadly School Bus Crashes in One Week

Orange Mound Youth Association children were returning to Memphis from a football tournament in Dallas when the bus they were riding flipped over in the early hours of December 3rd. One of the occupants, a third-grader, was killed, and at least 45 others were injured.

Initial reports and chaperone accounts say that the bus driver lost control and the bus left the off-ramp pavement, flipping "15 to 20 times" before coming to a rest on its side. The crash occurred at an exit ramp of Interstate 30 just outside of Benton, Arkansas.

On the evening of December 5, a second bus crash occurred along Interstate 74 southeast of Bloomington,



First responders inspect a crash that involved a school bus and a wrong-way semi. Image source: WNDU

Illinois, when a bus carrying a high school freshman girls' basketball team hit a semi-truck head on. The team was returning to Normal West Community High School after a game.

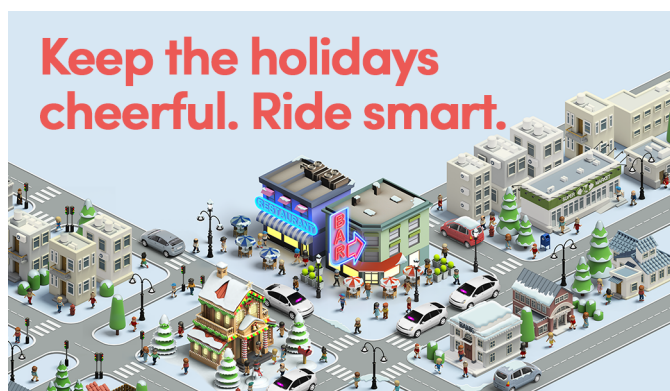
The semi-truck was going the wrong way, driving eastbound on westbound lanes. A volunteer for

the basketball team died, and several students were taken to hospitals. Their coach sustained broken bones. The driver of the semi died as well.

Meanwhile, a third fatal bus crash occurred near Plymouth, Indiana that same morning, when a truck rear-ended a school bus that stopped at a railroad crossing. A middle school student was killed. The students were on their way to a Christmas musical.

Source: [ABC11](#), [KARK](#), [News Channel 20](#), [FOX Illinois](#), [CNN](#).

# Metro East: Your Free Lyft Ride Is Waiting



## IDOT, ISP, LOCAL POLICE TEAM UP IN CLEVER EFFORT TO PROMOTE SOBER RIDES

By THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

COLLINSVILLE – To help provide safe and sober travel options over the holidays, the Illinois Department of Transportation and numerous law enforcement agencies announced today that \$10,000 in Lyft ride credits will be available in the two largest Metro East counties. From Dec. 21 to Jan. 2, the free credits can be used for rides originating and ending in Madison and St. Clair counties between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.

The ride credits are available in \$20 increments per Lyft user through a grant from the Governors Highway Safety Association and ride-share service Lyft, in conjunction with Illinois State Police and local law enforcement agencies throughout Madison and St. Clair counties.

"We're excited to work with Lyft, the Governors Highway Safety Association and our law enforcement partners to provide free rides in the Metro East area this holiday season," said Cynthia Watters, IDOT's bureau chief of Safety Programs and Engineering. "This is a new and innovative partnership that could save lives during a time of year when too many people are on the roads after attending parties and having one too many."

To be eligible, potential customers must download a code and enter it into the Lyft app. The code will be shared in the coming days on the following social media accounts:

Twitter:

- Illinois Department of Transportation – [@IDOT\\_Illinois](#)
- Illinois State Police – [@ILStatePolice](#)
- Illinois State Police, District 11 – [@ISPDistrict11](#)
- St. Clair County Sheriff's Office – [@StClairSheriff](#)
- Edwardsville Police Department – [@EdwardsvillePD](#)
- O'Fallon Police Department – [@OFallonILPolice](#)
- Troy Police Department – [@TroyPolice](#)
- Maryville Police Department – [@MaryvillePD](#)
- Collinsville Police Department – [@CollinsvillePD](#)
- Granite City Police Department – [@GraniteCityPD](#)

Facebook:

- Caseyville Police Department – [Facebook.com/CaseyvillePolice](#)
- Glen Carbon Police Department – [Facebook.com/GlenCarbonPD](#)

Credits will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

"DUI is one of the most preventable factors in holiday fatal traffic crashes," said Illinois State Police District 11 Commander, Captain Tim Tyler. "Our goal is to make sure all motorists travel safely, with no tragedies this season. The ISP is proud to partner with IDOT and Lyft to offer free rides in the Metro East area during the upcoming holidays. Remember, Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over."

Driving impaired is never an option. Plan for a safe and sober ride home. Designate a sober driver, use public transportation or look to a ride-sharing service like Lyft.



Source: [Illinois Department of Transportation](#).

# TRAFFIC SAFETY INITIATIVES

## Eyes on 94

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio teamed up for a special enforcement campaign along Interstate 94 and nearby highways to monitor truck driving safety. The joint enforcement effort, involving the Illinois State Police, Indiana State Police, Michigan State Police, and the Ohio Highway Patrol, occurred the week of December 3.

Specifically, the joint effort focused on speeding, following too closely, improper passing, distracted driving, and improper lane use. These violations are the most common contributory causes for CMV-related crashes in the region.

The enforcement has previously been a success. For example, Michigan reported over 700 truck stops in last year's Eyes on 94 campaign.

Source: [CDL Life](#).

**Distractions decrease  
one's ability to move over.  
Put the cellphone down.**



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### Year-To-Date Fatal Crash Snapshot

December 19, 2018

932 Fatal Crashes\*

**1,016 Fatalities\***

On this day last year:

971 Fatal Crashes\*

**1,060 Fatalities\***

**44 Below**

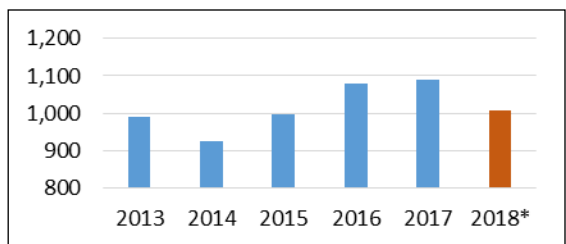
**Fatalities change**

\* Provisional, subject to change  
Source: IDOT

## 1,000 and Counting...

The number of fatalities in 2018 surpassed 1,000 on December 15, according to provisional fatal crash reports from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), making 2018 the third year in a row during which over 1,000 traffic fatalities were reported.

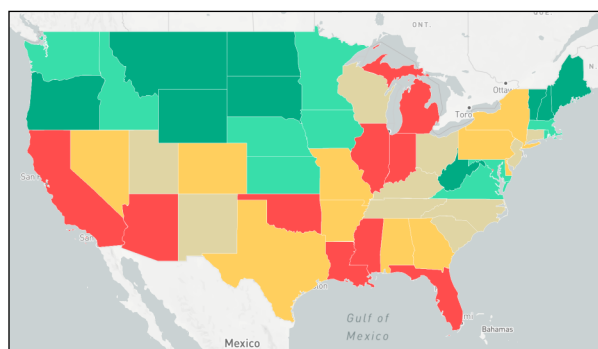
In 2016, there were 1,078 traffic fatalities reported, and in 2017, there were 1,090 traffic fatalities reported. Traffic fatalities have been on a consistent increasing trend since 2014.



Annual traffic fatalities. Data source: IDOT.

\*2018 data are provisional, as of December 19, 2018.

## Illinois Ranks 3rd Worst for School Route Safety



States were graded based on safety of the roads nearby schools. Red denotes the worst grades, and dark green denotes the best grades. Image source: ZenDrive

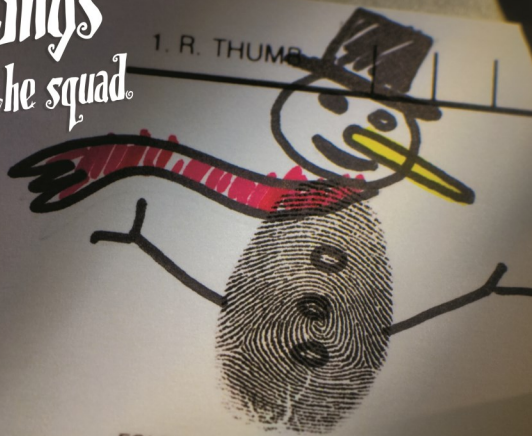
A new report by Zendrive reported that Illinois ranks the 3rd worst state in terms of dangerous driving nearby schools. This report uses data collected from smartphones when they drive near schools.

Source: [WTHI, Zendrive](#).

The worst state is California, followed by Florida, then Illinois, the District of Columbia, and Louisiana. The best state was Wyoming, followed by Hawaii, Vermont, Montana, and Maine. Many of the dangerous states had densely populated urban centers, such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami, and Chicago. The full interactive map can be viewed [here](#).

Because this data ranks states (and Washington, D.C.), counties, and schools by a composite score, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly why certain school areas are more dangerous than others. However, the results of this study can be used to help determine where more enforcement can encourage drivers to take caution when driving near schools.

Seasons Greetings  
from your pals on the squad.



Drive drunk and you will be arrested.

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