



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ILACP and Illinois Leaders Urge Drivers to Slow Down Ahead of Illinois Speed Awareness Day

**DOWNERS GROVE** – On July 23, 2025, law enforcement leaders, traffic safety officials, and community partners from across Illinois and beyond will unite for ***Illinois Speed Awareness Day***, a statewide initiative aimed at educating motorists about the dangers of speeding and reckless driving.

First launched by the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (ILACP) in 2016, this campaign continues to grow, including partnerships with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Illinois Tollway Authority, Illinois State Police (ISP), AAA, and hundreds of law enforcement agencies statewide. Representatives from each of these agencies came together at a press conference on July 22 at the Illinois Tollway Authority Headquarters in Downers Grove, Illinois.

"Technology is advancing rapidly... but today our greatest safety tool is personal responsibility," said **Chief Joe Leonas, president of the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police**, during the July 22 press conference. "Every mile per hour over the limit cuts down the time we have to react and increases the force of impact and raises the odds that someone won't make it home."

According to 2023 Illinois crash data, speeding accounted for **31% of all crashes, 36% of injury crashes, and 45% of fatal crashes**. A total of **1,240 lives were lost**, with **87,573 people seriously injured** due to speed-related incidents. The total estimated economic cost of crashes in the state reached \$8 billion.

"This initiative holds great promise, but only if you take responsibility to do your part," stated **Stephane Seck-Birhame, Bureau Chief of Safety Programs and Engineering at the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)**. "Today, we are coming to the public with a

simple and crucial message: Speeding catches up with you. Slow down and look around. It is not a game."

**Rohan Gayle**, Chief of Maintenance and Traffic at the Illinois Tollway, shared personal insight into the dangers of reckless driving. "I was almost killed 10 years ago on the job by a speeding driver," Gayle recalled. Luckily, the speeding driver managed to stop before anyone was hurt. "We shouldn't have to depend on luck to stay safe," stated Gayle.

**AAA spokesperson Beth Mosher** noted that while crashes may seem like random accidents, they are often the direct result of preventable decisions. "Nearly half of motorists admitted to driving 15 miles per hour over the posted speed limit on a freeway in the last month," said Mosher, referencing the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety Annual Survey.

**Captain Patrick Manno** of the Illinois State Police reiterated the ISP's commitment to prevention through both education and enforcement. In 2024, troopers issued more than **66,000 speeding citations statewide**. This year, **over 36,000 have already been issued**.

"Our troopers will be out in full force, but not just to issue citations, but to make visible and positive impacts on driving behavior," said Manno. "Because this isn't about punishment, it's about prevention."

The event included a reading of the official proclamation from Governor JB Pritzker, D-Illinois, declaring **July 23, 2025, as Illinois Speed Awareness Day**, and urging all citizens to drive responsibly.

As nearly 200 law enforcement agencies across Illinois prepare for heightened enforcement and outreach efforts during this year's *Illinois Speed Awareness Day*, residents across the state are urged to do their part **by slowing down and driving responsibly**.

## About the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police

The ILACP is the professional organization of Chiefs of Police and other leaders of law enforcement and public safety organizations in the State of Illinois. It is Illinois' leading police executive organization. ILACP promotes the professionalism and personal development of its members through innovative services, training, and camaraderie to make a positive impact on the quality of life in the communities our members serve.

## More Information

For more **information** on the *Illinois Speed Awareness Day* and **resources**, visit <https://www.ilchiefs.org/speed-awareness-day>

**Photos and videos** from the press conference as well as **graphics** for media use can be found [here](#).

To request **an interview** about Speed Awareness Day or for additional media inquiries, please contact:

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## **Speed Fact Sheet**

- Speed Awareness Day involves state, county, and local law enforcement officers across Illinois conducting HVE-focused and proactive enforcement targeting speed-related violations.
- Traffic crashes that result in death due to speeding are higher in the summer months. The highest fatalities occur between June and September. In Illinois for 2023, nearly 43% of speed-related fatal crashes occurred between June and September. (NHTSA FARS Data)
- In 2023, speeding was involved in approximately 33.59% of all fatal crashes in Illinois. Nationally, nearly 28% of all fatal crashes involved speeding. (NHTSA FARS Data)
- In 2023, 974 people were involved in a traffic crash in Illinois that was speed-related, and 44.76% of those involved (436) received fatal injuries. Nationally, 25,519 people were involved in a traffic crash that was speed-related, with 46.14% of those involved (11,775) receiving fatal injuries. (NHTSA FARS Data)
- In 2023, an average of more than one person died every day in a speed-related crash in Illinois. An average of 32 people per day were killed in a speed-related traffic crash in the United States. (NHTSA FARS Data)
- In 2023, young drivers (aged 15-20) in Illinois were involved in 162 fatal crashes, with 43.20% of those crashes (70) being speed-related, resulting in 89 deaths. In the United States, young drivers were involved in 5,133 fatal traffic crashes, with 38.65% of those crashes being speed-related, resulting in 2,219 deaths. (NHTSA FARS Data)

- In 2023, 45% of fatal crashes in Illinois construction or maintenance zones were speed-related. Speeding was involved in 29.96% of the fatal crashes in construction or maintenance zones in the United States. (NHTSA FARS Data)
- In 2023, 436 people died in Illinois in a speed-related traffic crash. More than 81% of those fatalities (356) occurred on a non-Interstate roadway where the posted speed limits were 55 miles per hour or less. Nationally, 11,775 people died in a speed-related traffic crash, with 87.34% of those fatalities (10,285) occurring on non-Interstate roadways. (NHTSA FARS Data)
- NHTSA considers a crash to be speeding-related if the driver was charged with a speeding-related offense, or if the responding officer indicated the driver was driving too fast for conditions at the time or was exceeding the posted speed limit.
- According to NHTSA, a crash on a road with a speed limit of 65 mph or greater is more than twice as likely to result in a fatality than a crash on a road with a speed limit of 45 or 50 mph and nearly five times as likely as a crash on a road with a speed limit of 40 mph or below.
- Speeding is usually defined as driving in excess of the posted speed limit or driving too fast for conditions, and can have dangerous consequences, including:
  - Reducing a driver's ability to negotiate curves or maneuver around obstacles in the roadway.
  - Extending the distance traveled before a vehicle can stop.
  - Increasing the distance a vehicle travels while the driver reacts to a hazard.
  - Increasing the risk of crashes and injuries because other vehicles and pedestrians may not be able to judge distance accurately.

### **Young Male Involvement in Speeding-Related Crashes**

- Young male drivers in the 15-20 and 21-24 year age groups are the most likely to be speeding at the time of fatal crashes. (National Safety Council)
- In 2023, nearly 37% of male drivers in these age groups who were involved in fatal crashes were speeding at the time of the crash, compared to 18% of female drivers in these two age groups. (National Safety Council)

### **Help Save Lives by Obeying Posted Speed Limits**

- Our goal is to save lives. Please join us in reminding all drivers to be alert, watch for, and obey speed limit signs - especially in school zones, residential neighborhoods, and on secondary roads.
- Drivers need to remember there is a reason for posted speed limits. The roadways are a dangerous place, and speed limits are designed to protect all users: drivers, passengers, pedestrians – everyone!
- Please remember, **Speeding Catches Up with You**
- [FARS Encyclopedia](#)
- [Speeding - Publication Topic - CrashStats - NHTSA - DOT](#)
- [Speeding - Injury Facts](#)