

Traffic Safety Newsletter

ilchiefs.org

idot.illinois.gov

isp.state.il.us

April 2019

Image © Illinois Tollway

“Enough Is Enough”, ISP Implores

Trooper [Christopher Lambert](#), end of watch January 12, 2019. Trooper [Brooke Jones-Story](#), end of watch March 28, 2019. Trooper [Gerald Ellis](#), end of watch March 30, 2019.

Three Illinois State Police (ISP) trooper traffic deaths within three months is abnormal. Until Trooper Lambert's tragedy, the last death occurred on 2017, when Trooper Ryan Albin of District 6 was [fatally wounded](#) in a traffic crash along Interstate 74.

Trooper Lambert's crash and Trooper Jones-Story's crash both involved vehicles failing to move over for emergency vehicles stopped on the shoulder with their emergency lights activated. This is a serious violation of Scott's Law, Illinois's Move Over law designed to maintain safe distance for those stopped on the roadside. Trooper Ellis was driving home when a wrong-way DUI driver collided with him head-on on Interstate 94 in Lake County.



Troopers Christopher Lambert (left), Brooke Jones-Story (center), and Gerald Ellis (right) were killed in three separate ISP squad car crashes this year.

In Trooper Lambert's case, although initially not cited for any Scott's Law violations, the driver at-fault was later [arrested](#) on charges related to the crash. The driver of the semi that struck Trooper Jones-Story and her squad

Continued on page 3

With Warmth Comes Construction Season

A portion of roadway construction was laid dormant for the winter season, but now that temperatures have risen, roadwork has resumed, with projects starting anew for the 2019 season as well as finishing up what was started in 2018.

[National Work Zone Awareness Week](#) was observed during the week of April 8–12. This year's slogan was “Drive Like You Work Here,” a mindset that can help empathize with those working in an environment where cars speed by in nerve-wrecking close proximity.

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT),

Continued on page 4





Image © Illinois Tollway

Dynamic Message Sign Contest Winners

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) held a contest in late 2018 for suggestions for new roadway safety messages to be displayed throughout the state's [dynamic message signs](#). From each of the six categories, one winner was decided. Expect to see these messages on the dynamic message signs throughout 2019.



Dynamic message signs like these are utilized on highways throughout Illinois.
Photo source: NewsChannel20

Congratulations to the selected winners, and thank you to all participants for your suggestions.

**PUT DOWN THE PHONE
AND NOBODY
GETS HURT**

Author: Leanne Harbour
Category: Distracted Driving

**ONLY THE CASSEROLE
SHOULD BE BAKED
DON'T DRIVE HIGH**

Author: Grant Mitchell
Category: Impaired Driving

**YOU LOOK SO
CUTE IN THAT
SEATBELT**

Author: Audra Noyes
Category: Occupant Restraint

**DASHING THRU
THE SNOW?
SLOW DOWN!**

Author: John Shukites
Category: Speeding

**DRIVE LIKE YOUR
FAMILY IS IN THE
NEXT CAR**

Author: Gene Larkin
Category: Vulnerable Users

**SOMEONE I LOVE
WORKS ON ROADS
SLOW IN THE ZONE!**

Author: Lisa Hansen
Category: Work Zone

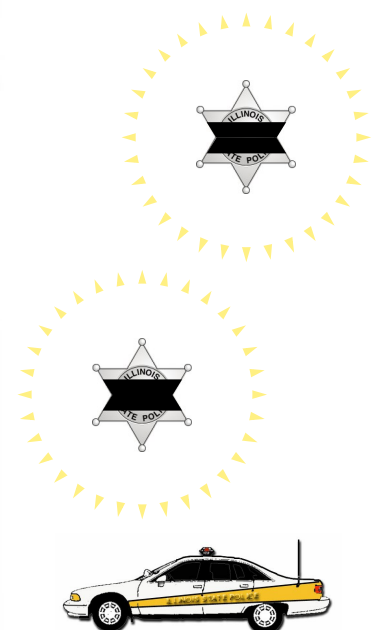
What Is Scott's Law? *~A Brief History~*

Under the Illinois completed statutes (ILCS) [Chapter 95, section 11-907](#) describes how drivers should respond to vehicles with their emergency lights activated. Vehicles must yield right-of-way to the emergency vehicle and move as close as possible to the right-hand curb of the roadway to make way for the vehicle. Intersections should not be blocked.

Subsection C is the Move Over component of section 11-907, stating that the driver should move over to give room to those on the shoulder with their hazard lights activated.

The Move Over law was passed in 2002 and dubbed Scott's Law, in honor of Chicago Fire Lieutenant Scott Gillen, who was also killed in 2000 while handling a crash. In 2017, the law was expanded to include any vehicles stopped with their hazard or emergency lights active.

Upon approaching such vehicles, the priority is to move over to the lane not adjacent to the stationary vehicle. But if that is not possible, the driver should slow down and maintain a safe enough speed for the road conditions.



Statewide Effort to Raise Scott's Law Awareness *Continued from page 1*

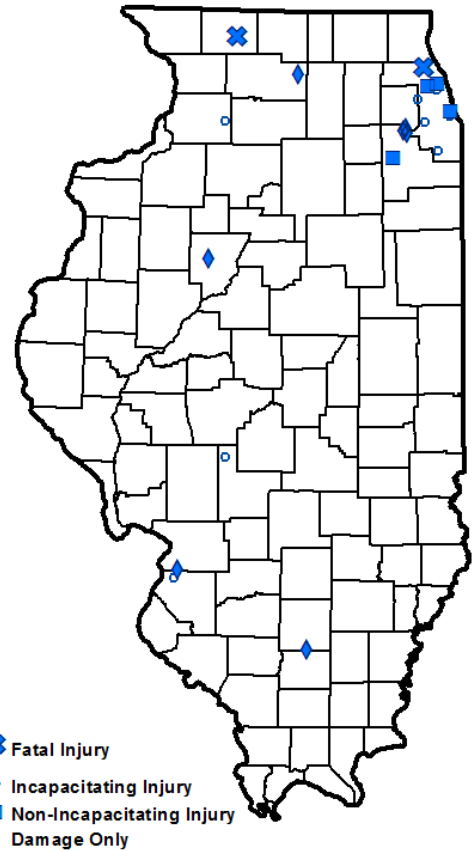
car was cited for Scott's Law violations and was also [arrested](#) later for additional crimes related to the crash. The wrong-way driver that collided with Trooper Ellis's squad car had an extensive criminal history going back to 1990 and was driving without a license. He was also fatally wounded.

These three deadly cases are not the only ones of concern. Just in 2019, over a dozen incidents were reported in which a state trooper was injured while handling roadside incidents with their squad car's emergency lights activated. This is more than the number of similar incidents that happened in all of 2018.

While the media have kept the count to just around 16, this count will change depending on the type of crash to include. If all minimal damage incidents are also included (i.e., no injuries to any persons involved), the

number jumps to 50 ISP squad car crashes, as of April 1.

ISP [deployed a graphic](#) to illustrate crashes related to ISP squad cars and plans to update it regularly as more information is gathered. Behind the scenes, ISP is working to raise awareness of Scott's Law by conducting enforcement campaigns that focus on making sure drivers pay attention to the roadway ahead and properly yield to emergency vehicles.



- ✕ Fatal Injury
- ◆ Incapacitating Injury
- Non-Incapacitating Injury
- Damage Only

ISP squad car crashes where the driver of the squad car was not at fault, as of April 1, 2019. Source: Illinois State Police.

**SCOTT'S LAW =
MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN**

**ENOUGH
IS
ENOUGH**

Messages like the above were broadcast in dynamic message signs across the state. Image source: Travel Midwest.

Multiple agencies are taking to social media to emphasize Scott's Law and explain to the public what exactly to do when approaching a stationary emergency vehicle. ISP District 17 [reported on Twitter](#) that six Scott's Law violations were reported within their district on April 6 alone. Some municipalities, like the Beckemeyer Fire Department, have also taken drastic measures such as [closing off entire roadway segments after a crash](#) to prevent any risk of Scott's Law violations.

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) displayed messages to move over for stopped vehicles on dynamic message signs throughout the state. April was also the nationally recognized Distracted Driving Awareness Month, and ISP integrated [distracted driving enforcement](#) into their Scott's Law details, especially during the week of April 12–19. Distracted Driving Awareness Week in Illinois was observed the week of April 21–27.

Care Urged In Construction Zones *Continued from page 1*

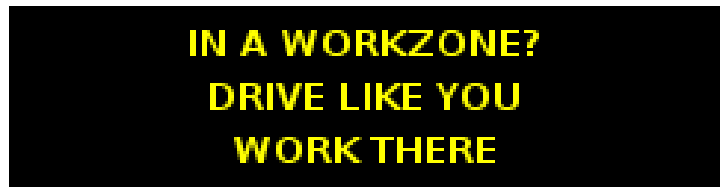
Illinois State Police (ISP), Illinois Tollway, and several industries and organizations [partnered for Work Zone Awareness Week in Illinois](#). They stressed the dangers of driving while distracted and speeding within work zones. Fines and consequences for traffic violations in work zones are heavy, especially if a worker is injured.

According to the IDOT, Illinois observes over 5,300 work zone traffic crashes per year, with more than 1,500 injuries per year. In 2018, 18 fatalities were reported in Illinois work zones, including one worker. A work zone begins at the first warning sign for road work (excluding portable changeable message signs) or the first hazard lights of a construction vehicle. Nationwide, an average of 150 construction workers are killed per year in work zones.

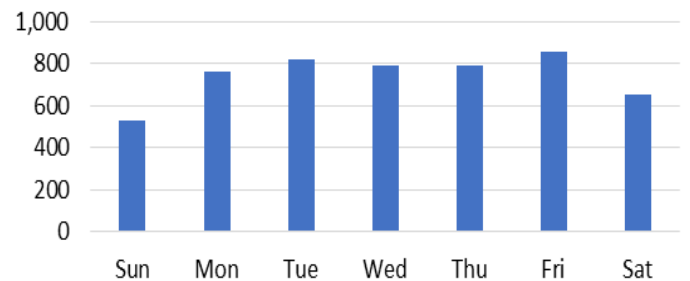
With the recent spike in ISP squad car crashes, including three ISP trooper deaths, Scott's Law has been emphasized to maintain safe distance for those stopped with emergency or hazard lights on. It should be reminded that [Scott's Law covers construction vehicles too](#). When construction vehicles are pulled over on the shoulder for road work, move over or slow down to give them a safe distance to perform their duties.



150 cones were placed in front of the IDOT headquarters to symbolize the 150 workers per year who are killed in work zones. Photo source: IDOT/Facebook.



Dynamic message sign for work zone awareness. Image source: Travel Midwest.



Mean number of work zone crashes by day of week, taken from 2012–16 annual means. Data source: IDOT.

WORK ZONE AWARENESS

Drive Like You Work Here

From 2013 to 2017 in Illinois

On average, each year there were:

5,333 work zone crashes, and
1,540 people injured as a result.

Workers are not the only ones injured or killed by work zone crashes.

178 Of the work zone fatalities in Illinois from 2013 to 2017...

Only **6** were worker fatalities.

Penalties

Speeding

1st offense = **\$375***
*\$250 beginning July 1, 2019.

2nd offense = **\$1,000***
*\$750 beginning July 1, 2019.

Hitting a worker

A fine of up to **\$10,000** & **14 years** in prison.

Safety Tips

- Drop it and drive.
- Slow down and obey speed limits.
- If possible, move over for workers.
- Pay attention. Conditions can change quickly.
- Give heavy vehicles room to adjust to conditions.
- Remember: Traffic backups can occur at any time.

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Image © Illinois Tollway

It Is Really A Matter of Life or Death.

LifeOrDeathIllinois.com, IDOT's website that advocates safe driving, was renewed to include anecdotes of loved ones who were killed related to distracted driving, DUI, bicycle or motorcycle awareness, or work zones.

Pictures and videos were also included with the anecdotes. They were collected after IDOT began a campaign in January to encourage Illinois residents to submit stories of their loved ones who died in preventable crashes.

In August 2018, IDOT and LifeOrDeathIllinois.com [held a campaign](#) to raise awareness of preventable crashes by showing damaged vehicles that were involved in fatal crashes. These vehicles were displayed in the rest areas of major Interstate routes. Earlier in 2018, a [series of videos](#) were released by LifeOrDeathIllinois.com, emphasizing the dangers of distracted driving, DUI, and driving without a seat belt. Other videos also raised awareness for work zone safety and motorcycle awareness.

STAY ALERT

31%
of fatal crashes in work zones involved at least **one large vehicle**

OUR ROADS SAFETY
Partnership for Responsible Driving
www.ShareTheRoadSafely.gov

Source: FARS 2016 Final and 2017 Annual Report File, NHTSA. FARS data shown here are from the 50 States, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico

Image Source: NMCSA

\$3.8 BILLION

Total amount spent in Illinois in 2016 on traffic crash-related damage, including medical costs and loss of productivity, based on NHTSA cost model and IDOT's recorded 324,000 crashes and 66,703 injuries

Source: Illinois Economic Policy Institute

APPROXIMATELY EVERY **FOUR HOURS,** SOMEONE IS STRUCK AT A HIGHWAY RAIL GRADE CROSSING IN THE UNITED STATES.

NHTSA

STOP. TRAINS CAN'T.

USDOT safety awareness campaign on obeying highway railroad crossing grade lights runs from April 16 through May 12. Image source: NHTSA.

Motorcycle and Bicycle Awareness in May

March comes in like a lion, and goes out like a lamb. April showers bring May flowers. May spreads awareness of bike riders.

As the cool season segues into the warmth of late spring, more and more will take to travelling outdoors on their motorcycles or their bicycles. With this timing, May is annually recognized by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month and National Bicycle Safety Month.

A [new law](#) in effect January 1, 2019, requires the Illinois Rules of the Road to include a parking technique called the “Dutch Reach Method”, in which the driv-

er would open their car door with their right hand in order to facilitate a better view of their blind spot when they are parallel parking. The method is useful in preventing dooring crashes, in which the vehicle door is opened in the path of a bicycle, causing a collision.

May 8 is Bike to School Day 2019. On this day, students and parents are encouraged to commute to school on their bicycle to promote bicycle safety and to raise motorists’ awareness of bicycles.



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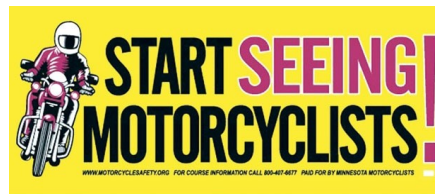
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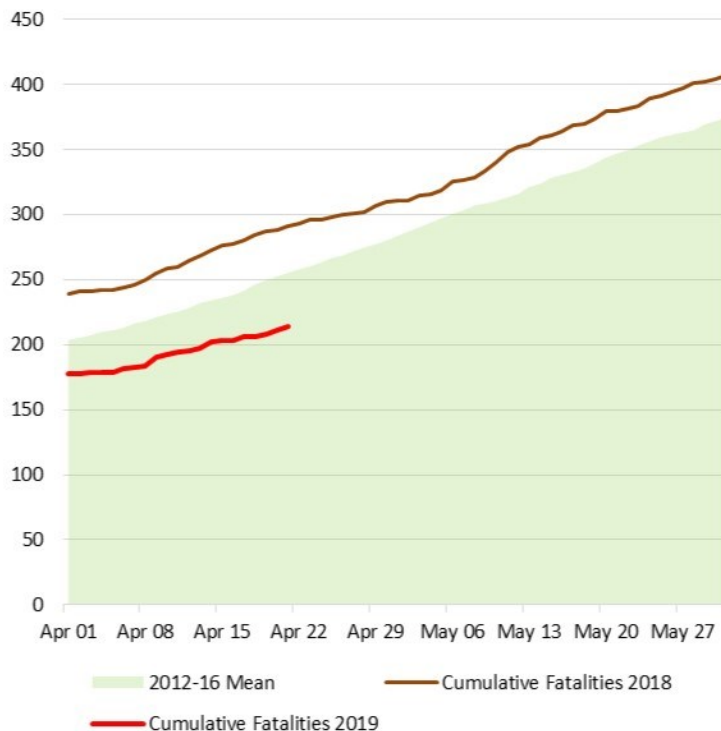
Year-To-Date Traffic Fatality Snapshot

Daily Fatality Report

April 21, 2019
235 Fatalities*

Previous Year
Year-to-date
307 Fatalities*

72 Below
Fatalities change



Last Month's Traffic Stats

March, 2019
84 Fatalities*

March, 2018
82 Fatalities*

2 Above
Fatalities change

*Provisional, subject to change