



# **New Year Brings 218 New Laws Effective January 1, 2014**

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Many new laws passed by State Representative Dwight Kay (R-Glen Carbon) and the Illinois General Assembly will take effect on January 1, 2014.

“In 2013 the Illinois General Assembly and myself considered and passed many contentious bills,” said Rep. Dwight Kay. “I believe it is important to let my constituents know about many of the new laws that will be in effect beginning the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.”

Some of the most recognized new laws taking effect January 1, 2014 range from the 70 MPH speed limit, medical marijuana, legislation that requires the Illinois EPA to provide more transparency with permits, the ban on handheld cell phones, and strengthening DUI laws for boat operators.

## **70 MPH Speed Limit**

The speed limits on rural Illinois Interstates will be increased to 70 MPH on January 1. “I was quite pleased that we were able to pass a speed limit increase that brings Illinois in line with the rest of the nation,” said Rep. Kay. P.A. 098-511 (Senate Bill 2356) allows certain urban and suburban counties to opt out of the higher speed limits. This law also lowers the number of miles over the legal limit for serious traffic offenses.

## **Medical Marijuana**

Also taking effect in January is P.A. 098-122 (House Bill 1) which creates the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program Act, the strictest medical marijuana law in the country. It establishes a pilot program that sunsets after four years. A specific list of debilitating, or terminal medical conditions are outlined in the bill which patients must be suffering from in order to qualify. The number of dispensaries

are limited to 60 throughout Illinois, and the Department of Agriculture may approve up to 22 cultivation centers. A patient is prohibited from possessing more than 2.5 ounces at a time.

## **Illinois EPA Permit Transparency**

A new bill creating transparency with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency will take effect on January 1, 2014. P.A. 098-237 (House Bill 2036) will require the Illinois EPA to maintain certain information regarding permits on their website. The information will include listings of each type of permit and the persons subject to them, a description of the application process and information about how long it takes to process and adjudicate a permit application.

“I sponsored this legislation because it will require the Illinois EPA to post details of the permitting process online and make it considerably easier for businesses to understand the process,” said Rep. Kay. “This information will allow businesses to more easily plan for the future and create jobs.”

## **Handheld Cell Phone Ban**

Another law taking effect in the January 2014 is a ban on handheld cell phones while driving. This prohibition on handheld cell phones includes exemptions for hands-free devices, two way radios, and electronic devices capable of performing multiple functions as long as the devices are not used for a banned purpose. This law, P.A. 098-506 (House Bill 1247), also specifies that a first offense is not a moving violation.

## **Stiffer Penalties for Boating DUI**

“In response to numerous incidents regarding boating DUIs it was time for the Illinois General Assembly to strengthen these laws,” said Rep. Dwight Kay. “Hopefully, these stronger penalties will help to deter individuals from operating a boat while impaired.”

P.A. 098-103 (Senate Bill 1479) provides that an individual’s driver’s license can be suspended for operating a boat while under the influence. The bill also states that the operator of any motorboat involved in a boating accident shall be deemed to have given their consent to testing for alcohol or other intoxicants. Refusal, a test of .08 or a positive result of drugs means that person can have their drivers’ license suspended.

For more information about the new laws which will take effect in 2014, please visit [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov) or <http://www.ilga.gov/reports/static/Public%20Acts%20by%20Effective%20Date.pdf> to view all new laws effective throughout 2014.