

Think Before You Throw!

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SPRINGFIELD – With the arrival of spring, the Illinois Department of Transportation is reminding drivers to be on the lookout for crews picking up litter and asking the public to do its part by properly disposing trash and saving taxpayers millions of dollars a year in unnecessary costs.

“While IDOT is committed to maintaining a positive impression of Illinois by having our maintenance teams collect litter from our roadsides, we need your help,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “If the warmer temperatures make you tempted to toss that food wrapper or pop can out your car window, please don’t. Trash is more than just an eyesore. It has real, negative impacts on both the environment and our communities.”

If you encounter maintenance vehicles and workers in litter pickup operations, slow down, move over and give them space – it’s the law.

Other litter facts:

- Last year, IDOT spent approximately \$6.1 million on litter pickup, the equivalent of resurfacing 30 miles of road or purchasing 40 new maintenance trucks that also plow snow in winter.
- Items tossed onto the road cause distractions, crashes and even hurt people. They also put workers who have to pick them up later at risk.
- Littering is illegal, subject to a fine of up to \$1,500. If convicted of littering on a highway, the violator may, in addition to other penalties, be required to maintain litter control for 30 days over a portion of that highway as well.
- Litter kills plants and animals.
- It's unsightly – no one likes to live where there's litter.
- Littering is a problem that's easily controlled. Use a trash can instead.
- Remember: Think before you throw!

After limiting activities in 2020 due to COVID-19, IDOT's Adopt-A-Highway program is resuming normal operations. The program partners IDOT with volunteer groups to help keep the state's non-interstate roadsides clean. Anyone can apply by completing an online application found on the IDOT [website](#) and "adopting" a two-mile section of highway.

Please email DOT.AAH@illinois.gov or call (217) 557-3224 if you have any questions or wish to join the 10,000 volunteers currently involved in the Adopt-A-Highway program.