

# Increased Road Rage Incidents Leading To Violence On Chicagoland Expressways

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CHICAGO – The Illinois State Police (ISP) is warning the public not to engage in aggressive driving behaviors as the number of reported road rage incidents resulting in expressway shootings is increasing. Motorists are not only at risk of being involved in a traffic crash due to road rage but there is now the danger of being involved in an expressway shooting.

“Over the past year, we’ve seen an increase in reported road rage incidents escalating into violence,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “As we head into summer, high temperatures can lead to hot tempers and people losing their cool, even the dangerous or deadly use of firearms. Getting ahead or getting even with another driver is not worth the risk of a deadly crash or violence. Keep calm and stay alive.”

From January through mid-June, approximately 35% of expressway shootings ISP responded to in the Chicago area were classified as road rage incidents, according to self-admissions from victims or witnesses. That’s up from roughly 12% for all of 2021 for Chicago-area expressway shootings documented as road rage related.

Examples include a victim driving on I-90 in the afternoon earlier this month when one round was fired through his window. ISP located the vehicle with the help of license plate readers and the driver admitted to the road rage incident. In another situation, a victim driving on I-94 stated he was involved in a road rage incident and his vehicle sustained 20 defects or bullet holes.

Motorists should recognize the warning signs of aggressive driving to avoid becoming involved in a potentially dangerous situation. Tailgating, cutting off other vehicles, improper lane changes, distracted driving, and speeding are all examples of aggressive driving that could lead to a crash or a potential road rage incident. Victims of aggressive driving or road rage incidents should never engage or confront the driver. The best action to take is to ignore the aggressive driver and call 911 immediately. Motorists who are being followed by an aggressive driver should drive to the nearest police department when possible, or drive to a well-lit, populated area and call 911.