

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ILLINOIS HIGH-SPEED RAIL CORRIDOR WORK CONTINUES *Amtrak Lincoln Service* and *Texas Eagle* trains affected; Work underway now north of Bloomington-Normal

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Transportation (Illinois DOT) and Union Pacific Railroad are beginning the final phase of 2012 upgrades to Illinois' signature high-speed route, Chicago-St. Louis, for future high-speed Amtrak trains. The improvements for 110 mph service include the installation of new premium rail with concrete ties and stone ballast; upgrades to bridges, culverts and drainage; signal and wayside equipment installations and upgrades; and roadway-rail grade crossing improvements.

As of June 16, work will progress to north of Bloomington-Normal and most days it will lead Amtrak to charter motorcoaches for Amtrak *Lincoln Service* (Trains 300-307) passengers at St. Louis, Alton, Carlinville, Springfield, Lincoln, Normal, Pontiac, Dwight, Joliet and Summit, Ill. The Amtrak *Texas Eagle* (Trains 21/321/421 & 22/322/422) will detour between Chicago and St. Louis for the same period, with alternate transportation in both directions between Joliet and St. Louis.

In order to expedite travel between Chicago and downstate, many of the motorcoaches will connect to and from Amtrak *Illini* and *Saluki* trains in Champaign-Urbana to avoid Chicago suburban highway congestion and downtown Chicago traffic. The attached Passenger Service Notice covers the details of the work. Notices about this disruption are also posted at stations and displayed as part of the booking process on Amtrak.com.

Temporary road crossing closures due to construction will be updated on a nightly basis on the Official Illinois High-Speed Rail Chicago to St. Louis Project Website, www.idohtsr.org.

The temporary changes will allow Union Pacific's Track Renewal Train crews to improve infrastructure to enable Amtrak service to travel at speeds up to 110 mph (177 kph), an

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NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORPORATION

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increase from the current maximum of 79 mph (127 kph). Illinois DOT and Amtrak are planning to preview higher speed trains in September 2012 between Dwight and Pontiac. The Dwight to Pontiac segment will be the first part of the corridor to experience trains traveling at the higher speed.

This is the last scheduled year of large-scale construction leading to alternate transportation on the corridor. When work began with a ground-breaking north of Alton in 2010, it was among the first high-speed rail projects in the country to begin construction.

Additionally, a stringent Quality Control/Quality Assurance program has been set up for the Illinois High-Speed Rail Project for materials and equipment to be used. During the 2010-11 construction seasons, certain concrete railroad ties installed in the High-Speed Rail Corridor were failing a laboratory test predictive of durability. No ties have failed in service but as a precautionary measure all 115,000 of the implicated ties are scheduled for removal from service by the end of 2012 at Union Pacific's expense.

About Amtrak®:

Amtrak is America's Railroad®, the nation's intercity passenger rail service and its high-speed rail operator. A record 30.2 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in FY 2011 on more than 300 daily trains – at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph) – that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces. Amtrak operates intercity trains in partnership with 15 states and contracts with 13 commuter rail agencies to provide a variety of services. Enjoy the journey® at Amtrak.com or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Join us on [facebook.com/Amtrak](https://www.facebook.com/Amtrak) and follow us at twitter.com/Amtrak.

About Illinois DOT

The Illinois Department of Transportation provides safe, cost-effective transportation for Illinois in ways that enhance quality of life, promote economic prosperity, and demonstrate respect for our environment. Illinois DOT provides leadership throughout Illinois for the improvement and coordination of the state's multi-faceted transportation system and serves as an advocate and trusted adviser to local governments and other community agencies involved in providing transportation access and services for all of Illinois. For more information, visit www.dot.il.gov/.

For information regarding the Illinois High Speed Rail project, visit www.idothsr.org or join us on Facebook at [facebook.com/IllinoisHighSpeedRail](https://www.facebook.com/IllinoisHighSpeedRail). Call 1-855-IDOT-HSR (855-436-8477) with questions or comments regarding this project.

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