

August 14, 2025

We once again are writing to bring urgent attention to the dangerous intersection at State Highway Rt 50 and 12000 North (County Line Road), located on the border of Kankakee and Will Counties. We have responded and continue to respond to a high number of serious motor vehicle accidents at this location — including recent incidents with fatalities. Despite repeated communications, documented dangers, and countless emergency responses, no meaningful corrective action has been implemented by the Illinois Department of Transportation or the elected officials who represent this jurisdiction.

While additional signage, rumble strips, and flashing lights installed earlier this year initially reduced accident frequency, the improvement has not lasted. Over the past 2 ½ years, there have been 64 accidents that we have responded to at that intersection. In just the past several months, seven more accidents have occurred with 2 fatalities— a clear indicator that the current measures are insufficient.

### Rt 50 & 12000N (County Line) Intersection – Summary of Issues

This is a complex intersection with complex issues that create perfect conditions for repeated accidents:

#### 1. Traffic Volumes & Behavior

- Four-way highway-speed traffic, with the highest volumes during commuting hours.
- Heavy semi-truck traffic using 12000N to avoid I-80, traveling to/from I-65, Elwood, and Joliet — often directed by GPS and mapping services.
- Long lines and delays increase driver impatience, leading to risky maneuvers: pulling out too quickly, crossing four lanes, or turning directly into highway-speed traffic.
- Many drivers are from outside the local area are unaware of the intersection's dangers.

#### 2. Highway Geometry & Visibility

- Rt 50 runs northeast at an angle to 12000N, parallel to CN railroad tracks, creating difficult sightlines.
- Power poles, highway signs, and seasonal vegetation block visibility.
- The absence of turn lanes forces turning vehicles, particularly semis, to slow abruptly and block sightlines for other drivers.

#### 3. Infrastructure Deficiencies

- No advance flashing warning signs on Rt 50 to alert drivers of the busy intersection.
  - East and west approaches have stop signs and some warning signage, but road width, geometry, and obstructions contribute to unsafe entry into Rt 50.
  - Semi-trucks frequently knock over stop signs and warning signs when turning due to inadequate roadway design.
4. 12000 North Road East Side Conditions
- Two-lane asphalt with stop signs and limited warning signage.
  - Power pole obstructions and geometric layout add to delays and risky driver decisions.
5. 12000 North Road West Side Conditions
- Tar-and-chip surface with no lane markings, not designed for heavy truck use but still frequently traveled by semis.
  - Proximity of CN tracks to Rt 50 leaves little stopping distance; elevation drop and poor drainage worsen control during sudden stops.
  - No rumble strips to provide early warning.
6. Jurisdictional Complexity
- Boundaries for Kankakee County, Will County, Peotone Township, Manteno Township, ISP Districts 21 & 5, IDOT Districts 1 & 3, Manteno Fire, Manhattan (Peotone) Fire, and CN Railroad all converge here.
  - Manteno and Manhattan Fire coordinate response, but IDOT maintains control — and the pace of their process is unacceptably slow given the severity of the hazard.
7. Accident Reporting Gaps
- Inconsistent address descriptions and fragmented data between jurisdictions obscure the true number of incidents.
  - Delays in injury updates and inconsistent mapping of accident start/end locations understate the intersection's danger.
8. Solution Requirements
- A plan, design, and funding package that does not take 5–10 years to implement.
  - Immediate engineering study to evaluate:
    - Turn lanes in all directions
    - Full traffic signal installation
    - Curbs and drainage improvements
    - Intersection lighting
    - Adjusting intersection approach angles
  - Advance warning systems and design changes that address the intersection's unique geometric and traffic challenges.

Bottom line: This intersection has been dangerous for years, and the pace of state-level action is unacceptable. Every day without intervention is another day where lives are at risk. Public safety must take precedence over bureaucracy.

The solution cannot take another 5–10 years to implement. Every delay means more accidents, more injuries, and more families forever changed. We cannot accept a timeline that stretches into the next decade. This needs to be a top-tier safety priority for you now!

The Manteno Community Fire Protection District is ready to supply accident data, response records, and operational input for immediate planning. I urge your office to support and commit to a definitive, accelerated timeline for a full safety redesign and implementation at Rt 50 & 12000N.

Sincerely,

Rick Petersen  
Fire Chief  
Manteno Comm. Fire Protection District  
13 S. Walnut St.  
Manteno, IL 60950  
Office – 815.468.6619  
Cell – 815.719.1967  
[rpetersen@mantenofire.com](mailto:rpetersen@mantenofire.com)

Scott B. O'Brien  
Fire Chief (ret.)  
Manteno Comm. Fire Protection District  
13 S. Walnut St.  
Manteno, IL 60950  
815.953.7033  
[sobrien@mantenofire.com](mailto:sobrien@mantenofire.com)