



## PRESS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

### **Manteno Community Fire Protection District Fire Chief Calls for Immediate Action at Dangerous Rt 50 & 12000N (County Line Road) Intersection**

### **Multiple Fatalities and Accidents Continue While State Agencies Delay Safety Improvements**

**Manteno, IL — [August 14, 2025]** – The Manteno Community Fire Protection District is sounding an urgent alarm over the intersection of Illinois Rt 50 and 12000 North (County Line Road) on the Kankakee/Will County line — a location that has seen repeated serious accidents, including multiple fatalities, despite years of warnings to state agencies and elected officials.

In the past two months alone, emergency crews have responded to **7** separate accidents at this intersection. Manteno Fire Chief Richard Petersen says the situation is “beyond unacceptable” and that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and responsible legislators must take immediate corrective action to prevent further loss of life.

“We are at a point where inaction is costing lives,” said Chief Petersen. “We’ve sent letters, shared data, and responded to more crashes than we can count — and yet the state process remains slow and bureaucratic. The public needs to know that this intersection is dangerous every single day, and the delays in fixing it are putting drivers at risk.”

### **Why This Intersection Is So Dangerous**

- **Heavy Highway-Speed Traffic** – Four lanes of Rt 50 at 55 mph intersecting with high-volume east/west traffic, including a significant number of semi-trucks avoiding I-80.
- **Geometric & Visibility Hazards** – The angled layout, power poles, signage, and seasonal vegetation block sight lines.
- **No Turn Lanes or Advance Warnings** – Drivers turning onto or across Rt 50 must do so without protected turn lanes or flashing warning systems.
- **Jurisdictional Confusion** – The location sits at the boundary of multiple counties, townships, fire districts, and police jurisdictions — making accurate accident reporting and coordinated action difficult.
- **Proven Ineffectiveness of Current Measures** – Added rumble strips, flashing lights, and signs have only temporarily reduced incidents.

## A Call for Immediate, Permanent Solutions

The Manteno Community Fire Protection District is calling on IDOT to bypass its usual slow-moving process and immediately begin engineering and funding a redesign that includes:

- Full traffic signal installation
- Turn lanes in all directions
- Intersection lighting
- Curbs and drainage improvements to reduce hydroplaning
- Adjustments to intersection approach angles for better visibility
- Advance warning systems for highway drivers

Chief Petersen emphasizes that 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 — now.”

The Manteno Community Fire Protection District continues to work in partnership with neighboring fire districts to ensure the fastest possible response to incidents at this location. However, the Chief stresses that emergency responses are not a substitute for prevention.

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