OHIO TURNPIKE NEWS RELEASE
682 PROSPECT ST. • BEREA, OHIO 44017 • 440.971.2066 • WWW.OHIOTURNPIKE.ORG

Ohio Turnpike and Ohio State Highway Patrol Urge Motorists to Make Safety a Priority During Thanksgiving Holiday Travel

BEREA, Ohio (Nov. 20, 2026) – As families and friends prepare to gather for Thanksgiving, the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission and the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) are reminding motorists that safe driving decisions can make all the difference in getting to their holiday destinations safely. Drivers are urged to buckle up, drive sober, stay alert, avoid distractions and obey posted speed limits.

“Thanksgiving is a time for making memories with family and friends, and the most important part of any holiday trip is arriving safely,” said Ferzan Ahmed, P.E., executive director of the turnpike commission. “We encourage motorists to plan ahead, allow extra time for their travels and take advantage of our 14 service plazas to rest, refuel and recharge along the way. Making safe decisions can help ensure everyone gets home for the holidays.”

To help accommodate increased traffic during the Thanksgiving holiday travel period, construction activities in work zones across the Ohio Turnpike will be limited from Wednesday, Nov. 25, through Monday, Nov. 30. At least two lanes of traffic in both the eastbound and westbound directions will remain open across the Ohio Turnpike.

During the 2025 Thanksgiving travel period, Tuesday through Sunday, about 954,000 vehicle transactions were recorded on the Ohio Turnpike, with over 57 million vehicle miles traveled. With winter weather potentially adding another challenge for holiday travelers, motorists are also encouraged to monitor forecasts and adjust their driving accordingly.

“Ohio weather can change in a matter of hours, so motorists should be prepared for anything when traveling during the Thanksgiving holiday,” said Chris Matta, P.E., chief engineer/deputy executive director of the turnpike commission. “Our crews are ready to respond to changing road conditions, but we need drivers to do their part, too. If you encounter snowplows, slow down, and give operators plenty of room to work, and maintain a safe distance behind them so crews can safely clear the roadway.”

To encourage safe driving and promote holiday travel awareness, the turnpike commission will partner with OSHP and other organizations for a Customer Appreciation Event on Wednesday, Nov. 25, at Middle Ridge Service Plaza (milepost 139.5 westbound) in Amherst from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event will provide an opportunity to connect with travelers and reinforce important roadway safety messages ahead of Thanksgiving Day. Click here to watch the promo video.

“Every driver has a responsibility to make choices that protect themselves, their passengers and everyone else sharing the road,” said OSHP Sgt. Ryan Purpura. “Before heading out, make sure everyone is buckled up, put your phone down and designate a sober driver. Speeding, impairment and distracted driving can have life-changing consequences. We want families to spend Thanksgiving together, not experience the heartbreak of a preventable crash.”

Motorists who encounter impaired or reckless drivers, or motorists who are stranded along the roadway, are encouraged to safely contact the OSHP by dialing #677.

Contact:

Brian Newbacher
Public Information Officer
Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
(m) 440.690.2223
brian.newbacher@ohioturnpike.org

Charles Cyrill
Communications Director
Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission
(m) 440.821.3399
charles.cyrill@ohioturnpike.org