

SEMIS PRESENT PUBLIC SAFETY DANGER AT VOLLMER VIADUCT



Photo obtained through FOIA

For decades the residents of Olympia Fields, and the surrounding towns, have requested that their government provide a creditable solution for the increasingly large volume of trucks that have illegally used Vollmer Road. Vollmer is only one of two local East/West roads for trucks, the other is US 30. Vollmer is a very old, narrow two lane road, built over a century ago, it was not constructed for today's large semis that disregard the present posted regulatory signage that slam their trucks into the 11 foot 9 inch viaduct. Today's semis require a clearance of a minimum 14 feet or more.

On March 17, 2022, Sharp contacted the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways, for they have jurisdiction of Vollmer Road. We had also sent certified carbon copies to:

- Toni Preckwinkle, President Cook County Board
- James M. Derwinski, CEO/Executive Director of Metra
- President & Chief Executive Officer at CN
- Headquarters Google
- Michael Hastings, State Senator
- US Department of Transportation
- Fire Chief of Chicago Heights Illinois
- Illinois Transportation Department

Each Vollmer Road truck accident results in the following:

- A hinderance and inconvenience to motorists
- Endangers the lives and safety of citizens for the Fire and Emergency Vehicles that use this road to provide fire safety or to transport victims to the St James/Olympia Fields Hospital on 203rd and Crawford
- Unnecessarily requires police officers, from both departments, to be assigned for traffic control
- Very serious property damage to the Viaduct

Sharp received FOIAs' from both the Olympia Fields and Flossmoor Police Department on February 24, 2022, to determine the frequency of these truck violations occurring at this viaduct over the past 5 years. 41 incidents occurred in Olympia. Flossmoor Police had 17 trucks striking this viaduct. We thank both Police Departments for their assistance.

Sharp, requested that the following examples be considered to provide solutions:

- **Immediately redesignating this section of Vollmer Road between Kedzie and Western as a No Trucks Allowed Road.**
- Posting an overhead lighted sign which could warn truckers that if his rig strikes the sign, that it will not clear the viaduct.

It was reported by Flossmoor Police that certain truck drivers allegedly indicated that their GPS systems and Google Maps had inappropriately designated Vollmer as a truck route.

Because of the projected large increase in truck traffic, from the construction of numerous “Logistic Centers” in this area, there must be a more permanent solution of this road for truck traffic by the County by contracting **Roadway Excavation** to increase the height of this viaduct and/or constructing a four lane roadway extension from Kedzie to Halsted.

Shamefully, not one agency contacted by Sharp responded! Does the County care? Could this be the reason that the Cook County infrastructure is in such poor condition? Some of our residents have asked if this viaduct problem would have been resolved if some politically affiliated contractor had possibly provided a solution? Must the people wait until there is an unfortunate accident at this location? The voters must receive answers to these questions.