

2016 National Work Zone Awareness Fact Sheet

Don't Be
THAT
Driver!



Work on Safety.
Get Home Safely.
Every Day.

DON'T BE THAT DRIVER

- Out on the road none of us want to be that driver, who ruins someone's commute, day or life. Instead, each of us wants to get home safely.
- In roadway work zones, engineers and construction workers make safety their top priority – for drivers as well as themselves. However, drivers need to do their part, too.

STATISTICS

- Motorists are more than twice as likely as workers to be injured or killed in a work zone crash.
- Last year was the deadliest year in over a decade in Ohio's roadway work zones with 30 fatalities – nearly double the number in 2014.
- In 2015, there were 6,035 work zone crashes in Ohio.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND WORK ZONES

- A safe work zone is one where drivers know what to expect and are aware of the situation around them. To this end, ODOT employs the following:
 - Speed feedback signs to alert the driver when they are exceeding the speed limit.
 - Remote controlled portable message signs to quickly and safely add or change relevant traffic and incident related messages.
 - Permanent "EMERGENCY" detour signing set up around the work zone to safely and efficiently move traffic around the work zone in case of an incident.
- ODOT monitors work zone data in near-real time and compares it to the same location in the years prior to the implementation of the work zone. This allows the department to quickly identify work zone related problems and adjust the maintenance of traffic plan as needed, which helps to reduce crashes, injuries and fatalities.
- For highly congested work zones with available alternative routes, ODOT uses Dynamic Destination Message Signs at key decision points to give travel times through and around the work zone. This ultimately helps motorists avoid congestion and delay and to arrive safely at their destination.

- ODOT has a towing and recovery incentive to clear crashes from work zones faster, resulting in fewer secondary crashes, injuries and possibly fatalities.
- The Ohio QuickClear Program trains state and local law enforcement, safety and transportation personnel in traffic incident management. As a result, Ohio is well positioned to respond promptly to highway incidents and thereby reduce delays as well as the risk of secondary incidents.
- ODOT partners with the Ohio Department of Public Safety in managing the work zone enforcement program. Law enforcement officers are placed in critical work zones identified by ODOT on Interstate and freeway locations across Ohio and are tasked with specifically enforcing speed limits through these zones.

The number
of work zone
fatalities
doubled in
Ohio last year.

TIPS FOR DRIVERS

- **Don't Speed.** Obey reduced speed limits in work zones. It takes less than a minute more to drive through a two-mile work zone at 45 m.p.h. than at 65 m.p.h. One of the most common causes of work zone crashes is excessive speed.
- **Don't Tailgate.** Most accidents in work zones are rear-end collisions.
- **Stay Alert.** Dedicate your full attention to the roadway. The traffic pattern in a work zone may be shifted, and lanes may be closed. Watch for orange work zone directional signs, obey flaggers and be aware of workers and equipment which may be moving in a lane near you.
- **Be Patient.** Traffic delays in work zones are unavoidable, but patience can prevent accidents.

Learn more at transportation.ohio.gov/workzoneaware.



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JOHN R. KASICH, OHIO GOVERNOR

JERRY WRAY, ODOT DIRECTOR

Ohio Department of Transportation • News Release

Motorists twice as likely as workers to be injured or killed in work zones

ODOT to host National Work Zone Awareness Week kickoff event

COLUMBUS (*Monday, April 11, 2016*) – Last year was the deadliest year in over a decade in Ohio’s roadway work zones. With 30 fatalities – nearly double the number in 2014 – the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is warning motorists of work zone dangers, and asking for their help in reversing the trend.

While motorists are more than twice as likely as workers to be injured or killed in work zones, it’s the brave men and women on the front lines who have little more than an orange barrel between them and speeding cars,” said ODOT Director Jerry Wray. “With a near-record number of construction projects currently underway all over Ohio, it’s critical that *every* driver be alert and slow down as they travel through work zones.”

On April 12, ODOT will host the kickoff of the National Work Zone Awareness Week with an event in Perrysburg. The event’s purpose is simple: to prevent death and injury in roadway work zones. The theme for this year’s event is “Don’t Be *that* Driver!”

“Out on the road, none of us wants to be *that* driver, who ruins someone’s commute, day, or life,” said Director Wray. “Instead, each of us wants to get home safely. In roadway work zones, engineers and construction workers make safety their top priority every day - for drivers as well as themselves. However, drivers need to do their part too.”

The Work Zone Awareness Week kickoff will also honor the memory of highway workers, whose names appear on the National Work Zone Memorial. Among additions to the memorial this year are four former Ohioans: Lee Rizor, Amber Rooks, Shawn Blubaugh and John Fletcher.

Work Zone Awareness Week became a national event in 2000 to increase public awareness of work zone safety issues. It has grown ever since, with the majority of state agencies and other organizations sponsoring high-visibility education and outreach initiatives.

Some facts to consider...

- In 2015, there were 6,035 work zone crashes in Ohio.
- In 2014, 669 fatalities occurred in work zones across the U.S.
- Driving 45 mph through a two-mile work zone will only add a minute to your travel time.
- Roads can’t last forever. They require periodic maintenance—and thus work zones. Those short-term inconveniences mean long-term benefits for moving people and goods from place to place.
- Over the last five years, work zone crashes have increased nearly 15 percent.

Motorists can avoid crashes by staying alert and giving driving their full attention, following all posted signs and obeying flaggers, and not tailgating or speeding.

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Federal Highway Administration Calls for Safer Construction Season *Officials Urge People to Drive Safely As Highway Work Zone Fatalities Climb*

TOLEDO, Ohio – Deputy Federal Highway Administrator David Kim joined federal, state and local transportation officials, and highway safety advocates, today to kick off National Work Zone Awareness Week. The annual event coincides with the start of the 2016 highway construction season, and calls on drivers to be especially careful during warm-weather months when highway construction is at its peak.

In 2014, the most recent year for which data are available, 669 fatalities occurred in highway work zones – including 17 in Ohio where this year’s national kickoff event was held.

“While fatalities are about half of what they were 15 years ago, too many people are still dying in work zones,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “It’s up to you, me, and the rest of the driving public to keep workers and ourselves safe by slowing down and paying attention when behind the wheel.”

This year’s theme is “Don’t Be That Driver!” to remind drivers that work zones require them to stay alert and be prepared for sudden changes that distracted drivers may not notice in time to prevent a crash.

Surrounded by highway workers and families of workers killed in work zones by drivers, Kim and other officials honored the Ohio highway workers killed in the line of duty last year.

“We must do everything we can to keep highway workers, drivers, and vehicle passengers safe,” said Kim. “We’ve made good progress over the years but the slight increase in the most recent annual work zone fatalities tells us we still have much to do.”

Driver and vehicle passengers accounted for 82 percent of work zone fatalities in 2014, and distracted driving was a factor in 16 percent of fatal crashes in work zones. Speeding was a factor in nearly one-third of them.

Like the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) works with other USDOT agencies to reduce work zone crashes through grants to states and research on driver behavior. FMCSA has made work zone safety a national priority in its commercial vehicle safety plans, and partners with the International Association of Chiefs of Police in its “Drive to Save Lives” campaign to encourage all law enforcement to stop trucks and buses when they are seen operating unsafely. The agency also urges all motorists to do their part by granting large commercial vehicles extra room to maneuver, to avoid lingering in blind spots, to avoid distracted driving and to make safety the number one priority at all times.

“Every car, truck and bus driver needs to be constantly focused on the road ahead, recognizing slowing traffic and approaching work zones,” said FMCSA Acting Administrator T.F. Scott Darling. “For everyone’s safety, every driver must enter and proceed through roadway work zones with extra caution, carefully obeying signs and always maintaining a safe distance from the vehicle ahead.”

National Work Zone Awareness Week, sponsored each year by federal, state and local transportation officials, the American Traffic Safety Services Association and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials at the start of construction season, raises awareness of safety measures taken on roads all over the country.

To support this effort, FHWA encourages everyone to wear orange on Wednesday, April 13 for a nationwide “Go Orange Day.”

For more information on this year’s National Work Zone Awareness Week, visit http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/outreach/wz_awareness.htm, follow @USDOTFHWA on Twitter, or search trending topics #NWZAW and #OrangeForSafety

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