

Dept. of Transportation: Every driver can make construction zones safer

Posted on Monday, Apr 26, 2021

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Gov. Tony Evers proclaimed April 26-30 as Work Zone Safety Awareness Week, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) will be taking part in a nationwide campaign to spread awareness about safe driving as construction and maintenance activity increases for the spring and summer months.

- View the *Every Driver Makes A Difference* public service announcements (www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CXf1oUMeOo and www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7GNmKRPCyEY) which feature WisDOT employees asking drivers to be mindful of speeding and distractions.
- [Download the 2021 Wisconsin Work Zone Safety Fact Sheet](#) and look for information, statistics and tips throughout the summer in WisDOT's social media.

“One thing that unites us all as highway workers and motorists is that we all want to make it home to our families,” said WisDOT Secretary-designee Craig Thompson. “Even the smallest distraction can lead to a tragedy on the highway, so we ask everyone to stay focused – buckle up, phone down.”

Last year, despite traffic reductions related to the pandemic, there was still a work zone crash every 3.5 hours in Wisconsin. Over the past five years, Wisconsin work zones have seen more than 13,000 crashes causing 59 deaths and more than 5,000 injuries. The vast majority of crash victims are drivers and passengers with speed,

tailgating and distracted driving all common factors.

“Every moment matters behind the wheel,” said Tony Burrell, superintendent of the Wisconsin State Patrol. “We ask all drivers to stay focused, plan ahead and always expect the unexpected.”

Even at a reduced speed of 55 mph, a vehicle covers 80 feet per second, or the length of a football field in under four seconds.

In Wisconsin, work zones include major highway construction and rolling maintenance operations as well as emergency response, municipal projects and utility work along local roads. Wisconsin’s efforts are in coordination with National Work Zone Awareness Week.

How can people help?

- Drive safely, avoid distractions and obey posted speed limits. Be courteous and patient. Set a good example for others on the road.
- Leave the phone alone. Texting and driving is illegal statewide and talking on a hand-held mobile device is illegal in work zones.
- Slow down when you see workers and, if it’s possible, provide additional space by moving over. Wisconsin’s Move Over Law applies to maintenance operations as well as emergency response units.
- Show support for work zone safety with the social media hashtags #DriveLikeYouWorkHere, #NWZAW, #WorkZoneSafety, or #OrangeForSafety (but please never text or tweet and drive).
- Participate in “Go Orange Day” on Wednesday, April 28 by wearing orange in support of highway safety. (Tag it #OrangeForSafety)

- Visit [wisconsin.gov](https://www.wisconsin.gov) and search “work zone” for more tips and information.