**Work Zone Safety Week 2024**

**Get the Facts**

Preliminary data shows between 2018 and 2022, 44 people died and 3,682 more were injured in work zone traffic crashes in Minnesota.

In 2021, the last year for which national data is available, 956 people died in work zones, according to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) data. Also in 2021, 108 highway worker occupational fatalities occurred in road construction sites, based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Here’s more you should know:

**Work zone exposure**

* In the United States one work zone fatality occurs for every ~~4~~ four billion vehicle miles of travel and for every $112 million worth of roadway construction expenditures.

**Work zone fatalities**

* Between 2020 and 2021, work zone fatalities increased 10.8% while overall roadway fatalities increased 10.3%. In addition, we saw increases in the percentages of fatal work zone crashes involving rear-end collisions, as well as those involving a commercial motor vehicle (CMV). One bright spot was a slight decrease in fatal work zone crashes involving speeding.

**Work zone crashes**

* Fatal work zone crashes involving commercial vehicles increased significantly in 2021 — from 210 fatal crashes in 2020 to 291 in 2021. This 39% increase is in stark contrast to the 2% increase in fatal work zone crashes other types of vehicles.
* Work zones present many challenges for trucks and buses – narrow lanes, sudden stops, traffic pattern shifts, and uneven road surfaces require all drivers to stay alert. In fact, large trucks are over represented in work zone crashes, making up [nearly one-third of fatal work zone crashes](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/sites/fmcsa.dot.gov/files/docs/Large%20Trucks%20and%20Buses%20by%20the%20Numbers.pdf), according to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
* Passenger vehicles should stay attuned to CMV drivers ’who need to take extra precaution when driving through work zones.

**Best practices for work zone driving**Use the many tools available to check your route for work zones. Use detours to avoid passing through these areas.

* Reduce speed while traveling through work zones, paying close attention to signs and signals.
* Be aware of vehicles around you, especially CMVs.
* Be sure to pay close attention to road workers and flaggers – give them extra room, always slow when approaching them, and be prepared to stop if necessary.
* When approaching lane closures, do the [zipper merge](https://www.dot.state.mn.us/zippermerge/), and don’t forget to be attentive to vehicles around you and potential blind spots.
* Rear-end crashes are common in work zones – obey all speeds, avoid distractions, and always maintain extra space (at least 3 seconds) between your vehicle and the one in front of you.

Additional information and educational materials are available on [**WorkZoneSafety.org**](https://www.workzonesafety.org/crash-information/work-zone-fatal-crashes-fatalities/#national).

*Slow down. Pay attention. Do It for Them.* ***Work zones are temporary. YOUR Actions behind the wheel can last forever.***