

# NATIONAL WORK ZONE AWARENESS WEEK

APRIL 9 - 13

## 2018 WORK ZONE SAFETY: EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY



## FACTS ABOUT WORK ZONE SAFETY

### Georgia DOT and Work Zone Safety

- Since 1973, 60 Georgia DOT employees have died in work zone related incidents.
- Fatal work zone crashes are on the rise in Georgia with a steady increase from 23 fatalities in 2014 to 55 fatalities in 2017.
- In 2017, there were 20,834 total crashes in Georgia work zones, resulting in 7,276 injuries and 55 fatalities.
- Motorists or passengers make up 78% of work zone fatalities in Georgia.
- The top causes for fatal work zone crashes were roadway departure and rear end collisions. Both are often associated with distraction, driving too fast for conditions and driver impairment (under the influence or fatigued).
- Truck-involved and pedestrian-involved fatalities are also on the rise. The total includes 18 fatalities involving trucks and 12 pedestrian-involved fatalities.

### Background

- **National Work Zone Awareness Week** (NWZAW) is an annual spring campaign sponsored by federal, state and local transportation officials to raise the public consciousness about the need for driving safely in work zones. The campaign draws attention to the safety needs of road workers, as well as motorists. NWZAW is held at the start of the highway construction season across most of the country.
- National Work Zone Awareness Week, which began in 1999, is designed to inform motorists about the dangers of driving through work zones and of the perils faced by construction and maintenance workers.
- According to the Federal Highway Administration, nationally in 2015 (the most recent year for which data is available):
  - Work zone crashes increased 42% from 2013 to 2015;
  - 35,536 injuries occurred in work zones;
  - 700 work zone fatalities occurred (up 10 percent from 2014);
  - 35,526 work zone injuries occurred (a 9 percent increase from 2014);
  - 130 worker fatalities occurred (a 9 percent increase from 2014); and
  - There were 177 fatal crashes involving large trucks and busses in work zones
- **Work Zone Safety: Everybody's Responsibility**, the 2018 national theme for work zone awareness week promotes federal, state and local agencies, organizations, companies and individuals to work together and take responsibility for keeping our roadway workers and those traveling safe in work zones.

## 11 Tips for Driving in Work Zones

- **Obey the Rules of Work Zone:** (1) Pay attention (2) Slow down (3) Watch for workers
- **Expect the Unexpected.** Things may change quickly. Normal speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be closed, narrowed, or shifted, and people may be working on or near the road.
- **Don't Speed.** Obey the posted speed limit, even when workers are not present. In 2016, there were 190 work zone fatal crashes where speeding was a factor.
- **Don't Tailgate.** Keep a safe distance between you and the car ahead of you and the construction workers and their equipment.
- **Obey Road Crew Flaggers and Pay Attention to Signs.** Failure to obey speed limit signs or a flagger's traffic control directions can result in hefty fines and/or imprisonment.
- **Stay Alert and Minimize Distractions.** Give your full attention to the roadway and avoid changing radio stations or using cell phones and other electronic devices while approaching and driving in a work zone.
- **Keep Up with the Traffic Flow.** Do not slow down to gawk at road work.
- **Know Before You Go.** Expect delays, leave early and schedule enough time to drive safely. For 24/7 real-time traffic information call 511 or visit [www.511ga.org](http://www.511ga.org) (do not do this when driving!). And follow Georgia DOT on Twitter for additional updates.
- **Be Patient and Stay Calm.** Work zone crews are working to improve the road and make your future drive better.
- **Wear Your Seatbelt.** It is your best defense in a crash. And make sure your passengers are buckled up.
- **Remember** - Dads, Moms, Sons, Daughters, Brothers, and Sisters Work HERE!

## Work Zone Safety and Georgia Driving Laws

- **Distracted driving** is a key cause of many crashes, and this especially applies in work zones. In addition to DUI and Impaired Driving laws, related Georgia driving laws include:
  - **Cell phone** use is prohibited for drivers younger than 18 and school bus drivers (including hand-held and hands-free)
  - **Texting** is banned for all drivers
- Georgia's cell phone and texting laws: <http://www.gahighwaysafety.org/highway-safety/texting-laws/>
- **Georgia's Move-Over Law** requires drivers - when encountering a stationary emergency vehicle flashing emergency lights - to change lanes or slow down and be prepared to stop. This applies to Georgia DOT work zones, as well as law enforcement, first responders, tow operators and HERO and CHAMP operators. The Move-Over fine in Georgia is up to \$500.
- Georgia's Move-Over Law: <http://www.gahighwaysafety.org/highway-safety/move-over-law/>
- To view and share GDOT's 30-second work zone safety video and for additional information, visit [www.dot.ga.gov/DS/SafetyOperation/Workzone](http://www.dot.ga.gov/DS/SafetyOperation/Workzone).