

Work Zone Safety

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. It's critical that all road users approach work zones with caution and do their part to keep the road safe for everyone.

Work Zone Crash Trends

- In 2019, the most recent year for which data are available, 842 people died in highway work zone crashes compared to 757 the year before. The 11.2-percent increase is the largest percentage increase of highway work zone fatalities this century.
- On average, large trucks are overrepresented in work zone crashes. In 2019, over 33 percent of fatal crashes involved Commercial Motor Vehicles (CMV) and compared to the year before, the U.S. saw a 16 percent increase in the number of fatal work zone crashes involving large trucks or buses.
- From 2018 to 2019 fatal work zone crashes:
 - o involving a rear-end collision increased by 29 percent
 - o where speeding was a factor increased by nearly 40 percent
 - o involving worker fatalities at road construction sites increased from by nearly 9 percent

Sharing the Road

- Work zones present challenges for truck drivers – narrowed lanes, sudden stops, traffic pattern shifts, and uneven road surfaces can lead to crashes and fatalities if they are not prepared and alert. Plan your route, reduce speed, stay alert, and do your part while traveling through work zones.
- Large blind spots, long stopping distances, and size constraints make maneuvering large trucks and buses in work zones particularly challenging. Passenger vehicles should be mindful that CMV drivers need to take extra precaution when driving through these areas.

- Pay close attention to road workers and flaggers – give them extra room, always slow when approaching them, and be prepared to stop if necessary.

How to Drive Safely Through Work Zones

- There are plenty of resources available to research your routes and check for upcoming work zones. Make sure you know of any road work before embarking on your route and when possible, use detours to avoid having to pass through these areas.
- Reduce speed while traveling through work zones, paying close attention to signs and signals.
- Be aware of passenger vehicle drivers around you, who may not be aware of commercial vehicle driving challenges, including large blind spots and longer stopping distances.
- When approaching lane closures, move into the open lane as soon as possible – pay close attention to vehicles around you that could be in your blind spot.
- Rear-end crashes are common in work zones – obey all speeds, avoid distractions and maintain extra space between your vehicle and the one in front of you at all times.

MDOT understands that traveling through work zones can be frustrating. We want you to know that we are working diligently to reduce the impacts that road work has on motorists while delivering smooth and safe roads and bridges.

It is important to remember that road and bridge construction can be dangerous work in unpredictable environments. To ensure the safety of road workers and road users - always slow down, follow all posted signs, and be alert. Work zone safety is everyone's responsibility!



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