



State of Illinois
 JB Pritzker • Governor
Illinois Department of Transportation
 Omer Osman • Acting Secretary
Illinois State Police
 Brendan F. Kelly • Director
Illinois Tollway
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SECRETARY OF STATE

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“Drive safe. Work safe. Save lives.”

Work zone safety week: Combined efforts of workers, public to reach zero deaths

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police, Illinois Tollway, Secretary of State Jesse White, industry partners and frontline construction workers joined forces today for National Work Zone Awareness Week, asking the public to “Drive safe. Work safe. Save lives.”

“As we begin Year Three of the governor’s historic Rebuild Illinois capital program, you are going to be seeing and experiencing a lot of work zones, regardless of your mode of transportation. When you see orange, slow down, pay attention and avoid all distractions,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “Always remember, the people you pass working on equipment or behind the cones and barricades are someone’s father, mother, son, daughter, friend or neighbor. At the end of the day, they want to get home safely, just like you.”

The theme for this year’s National Work Zone Awareness Week is “Drive safe. Work safe. Save lives,” reinforcing the message that reaching a goal of zero work zone fatalities is truly a team effort by the public and the people who build our infrastructure. To call attention to the life-and-death issues facing workers and the public in work zones, Gov. JB Pritzker has proclaimed April 26-30 as “Work Zone Safety Awareness Week” in Illinois.

Throughout this construction season, the public should be on alert for lane closures, changes in traffic patterns, reduced speed limits and the presence of workers and equipment. To promote safety in the field this week, IDOT is once again promoting “tailgate talks” among its staff to give workers refreshers on work zone protocol.

“The Illinois State Police support efforts to bring awareness to the public regarding issues that affect the lives and safety of all workers in Illinois,” said ISP Director Brendan Kelly. “The goal of this week is to encourage people to make responsible choices and focus on the road when they get behind the wheel, so that together we can prevent another tragic loss to another family.”

Each year, more than 6,400 motor vehicle crashes on average occur in Illinois work zones, resulting in more than 1,700 injuries. In 2020, 37 people died in work zones in Illinois, including two workers.

“This year, drivers will encounter work zones all across our system as we invest nearly \$1.5 billion to rebuild, widen and improve our roads,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “This investment will mean better, safer roads for everyone, but it also means drivers must slow down and take precautions in work zones to protect the men and women who are making these vital improvements. Working together, we can make the roads safer for everyone.”

The following guidelines for traveling through work zones should be followed at all times:

- Drop it and drive. Phones and electronic devices down at all times – it’s the law.
- Obey the signs. They will help you safely navigate work zones – and sometimes avoid delays.
- Slow down. The posted speed limits are there for the safety of workers and you.
- Be on the lookout for slowed or stopped traffic.
- Consider the limitations of heavy equipment, trucks and commercial vehicles. Provide them extra distance to come to a complete stop if they are behind you.

“We have a responsibility to protect the people who work on and maintain our roads by driving safely and responsibly,” said Secretary of State Jesse White. “When you approach a construction zone, reduce your speed and pay attention – that means putting your phone away and keeping your eyes on the road. I am pleased to join with Gov. Pritzker and our state’s traffic safety partners in making sure that the roads of Illinois are the safest ever.”

For additional facts, printable materials and information on projects this year in Illinois, click [here](#) or visit idot.click/work-zones.

Work zone safety is yet another element of IDOT’s comprehensive multimedia campaign, Life or Death Illinois, highlighting the incredible responsibility of each driver to make good decisions and decrease the number of lives lost each year. Visit lifeordeathillinois.com for more information.

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