

# National Work Zone Awareness Week

April 26–30, 2021

Work zones play a critical role in the preservation and enhancement of our nation's roadways. They separate construction and maintenance activities from traffic, providing a safe route for all road users (motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists) and a safe area for workers. However, work zone related changes in traffic patterns and rights of way, combined with the presence of workers, and the frequent movement of work vehicles, may lead to crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

Through National Work Zone Awareness Week, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and its partners hope to bring attention to the critical issue of road user and worker safety in and around work zones.

It's important for everyone to do their part to be safe.

**Drive Safe. Work Safe. Save Lives.**

# Drive Safe. Work Safe. Save Lives.



Source: Federal Highway Administration

## Safety in Work Zones – how to drive safe, work safe, and save lives.

To protect field workers and all road users, follow these tips for traveling safely through work zones.

- **Know Before You Go.** Before heading out, check for the latest traffic conditions along your route. With information on active work zones, you can change your trip, possibly avoiding work zones altogether.
- **Stay Alert and Obey the Roadway.** Be aware of all activity occurring around you, including paying attention to other drivers and road users. Work zones change daily; pay attention so you can anticipate new traffic patterns. Remember, signs, cones, barrels, and flaggers are there to help maneuver you safely through the work zone.
- **Watch for Workers.** In 2019, 135 workers were killed in highway work zones.<sup>1</sup>

**Look out for all road users.** In 2019, 140 pedestrians and bicyclists lost their lives in work zone crashes.

- **Watch for Sudden Stops.** Work zone activity often leads to congestion, delays, and traffic queues. Be alert and watch for sudden stops. In 2019, nearly one quarter of all fatal work zone crashes involved rear-end collisions.<sup>2</sup>

- **Slow Down.** Speeding can lead to crashes with other vehicles and with field workers. Make sure to obey posted work zone speed limits and keep a safe distance from the vehicle ahead of you.

**Slow down, don't tailgate.** Speed was a contributing factor in over 31 percent of 2019 fatal work zone crashes, increasing from 26 percent the year prior.

- **Use Caution Around Large Vehicles.** Large vehicles have a slower reaction time, so refrain from making sudden lane changes in front of trucks or buses that are trying to slow down.

**Watch out for Large Vehicles.** Commercial motor vehicle (CMV) involvement in fatal work zone crashes continues to increase. Over 33 percent of fatal crashes in 2019 involved CMVs.

- **Keep Everyone Safe.** Be respectful of workers, fellow drivers, and all road users. We need everyone to work together to ensure we all stay safe.

Visit the FHWA Work Zone Management website at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/workzones](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/workzones) and the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse website at [www.workzonesafety.org](http://www.workzonesafety.org) for access to resources, guidance, and training.

## TOTAL WORK ZONE FATALITIES

by person type<sup>3</sup>



Drivers and passengers



Pedestrians and bicyclists



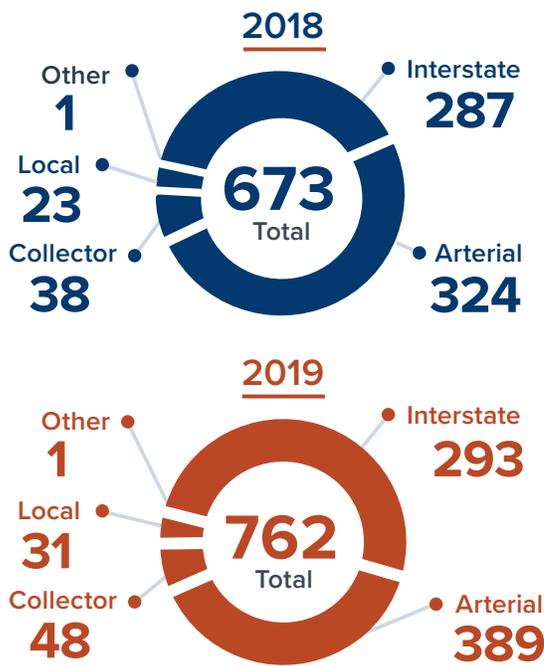
Others

Occupants of a non-motor vehicle transport device and persons on personal conveyances

	2018	2019
<b>Total</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>842</b>
Drivers and passengers	621	690
Pedestrians and bicyclists	131	140
Others	5	12

## TOTAL WORK ZONE FATAL CRASHES<sup>4</sup>

by type of roadway



The following types of fatal work zone crashes increased from 2018 to 2019

- Involving a Rear-End Collision
- Involving a CMV
- Where Speeding was a Factor

	2018	2019
Involving a Rear-End Collision	141 <b>21%</b>	182 <b>24%</b>
Involving a CMV	215 <b>35%</b>	250 <b>33%</b>
Where Speeding was a Factor	172 <b>26%</b>	239 <b>31%</b>
<b>Worker fatalities in road construction sites<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>124</b>	<b>135</b>

**Trends:** From 2018 to 2019, work zone fatalities increased by 11 percent, while overall roadway fatalities decreased by 2 percent.<sup>6</sup> The 11 percent increase in work zone fatalities outpaced the modest 0.3 percent increase in overall highway construction spending and the 0.8 percent increase in overall vehicle-miles-traveled nationally. Over the past 10 years, work zone fatalities nationally have remained at approximately 2 percent of total fatalities.<sup>7</sup>

Relative to 2018, 2019 also saw a 13 percent increase in the total number of fatal work zone crashes. The number of fatal work zone crashes involving large trucks or buses increased by 16 percent while crashes involving a rear-end collision increased by 29 percent. Most notably, the number of fatal work zone crashes where speed was a factor increased by nearly 40 percent. Additionally, the number of worker fatalities in road construction sites increased by nearly 9 percent between 2018 and 2019.

<sup>2</sup>2019 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with States, New York City, the District of Columbia, and Federal agencies.

<sup>3</sup>FARS 2019 Annual Report File, NHTSA. FARS data shown here are from the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

<sup>4</sup>FARS 2018 Final File and 2019 Annual Report File, NHTSA. FARS data shown here are from the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

<sup>5</sup>FARS 2018 Final File and 2019 Annual Report File, NHTSA. FARS data shown here are from the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

<sup>6</sup>2018 and 2019 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with States, New York City, the District of Columbia, and Federal agencies.

<sup>7</sup>FARS 2019 Traffic Fatality Data, NHTSA. FARS data shown here are from the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

<sup>8</sup>FARS 2010-2018 Final File and 2019 Annual Report File, NHTSA. FARS data shown here are from the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Note: Figures are subject to revision, as values reported in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) may be updated intermittently. Values shown here reflect what is reported by NHTSA as of January 2021



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Highway Administration**

April 2021  
FHWA-HOP-21-027