



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
transportation.ky.gov

Andy Beshear
GOVERNOR

Jim Gray
SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Chuck Wolfe
502.892.9038
chuck.wolfe@ky.gov

KYTC drives attention to work zone safety during construction season

Drivers reminded to slow down, drive distraction-free in work zones

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 14, 2020) – As highway construction continues into the fall across the Commonwealth, motorists can expect to see orange cones and flashing lights in work zones.

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) is driving attention to Kentucky's Work Zone Awareness Week (KYWZAW) – Sept. 13-18 – to encourage motorists to take a vested interest in work zone safety by slowing down and driving without distractions in active work zones.

Work zones are high-risk sites for work crews, but the safety of drivers and their passengers is also on the line. The number of work zone fatalities increased from three in 2018 to eight in 2019. Two of the victims were crew workers. The number of work zone crashes rose 20 percent from 1,042 in 2018 to 1,251 in 2019.

Distracted driving is a leading cause of work zone crashes. Distracted driving behaviors include texting or operating a phone while driving; eating, or applying makeup. Last year, 57 percent of work zone crashes listed distracted driving as a factor.

"National Distracted Driving Awareness Week is coming up in October, so this is the perfect opportunity to remind motorists of the importance of paying attention, not only when driving through work zones, but every time you're behind the wheel," said Kentucky Office of Highway Safety Acting Executive Director Jason Siwula. "Your safety, whether working within one of our work zones or just traveling through, is important to us. When you're behind the wheel, please put your phone down and focus on driving."

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) statistics are in line with Kentucky's work zone fatality numbers that indicate motorists are more at risk in a work zone. According to FHWA, in an average five-day work week, seven motorists and one worker are killed around the nation in work zone crashes.

State and nationwide solidarity to promote work zone safety

To promote safer work zones and to prompt a reduction in the number of preventable crashes, Governor Andy Beshear signed a proclamation declaring April 20-24 Work Zone Safety Week in Kentucky. However, with the current COVID-19 pandemic, Kentucky postponed the state's awareness week to September.

Behind every high-visibility vest is a person counting on the caution exercised by an unknown driver. Throughout the week, KYTC will share testimonials and post messages on overhead signs to encourage safe driving behaviors.

KYTC invites the public to show support of work zone safety by tweeting photos containing orange or orange graphics to Twitter using #glowky. A new Glow Orange filter has been added on Facebook for participants to change their profile photo to spread awareness.

Thursday offers another opportunity for industry partners and the public to demonstrate they are vested in work zone safety by sporting high-vis vests or gear, taking a photo and posting it on social media using hashtag #vestedinwzsafety.

To help prevent future work zone crashes, the Transportation Cabinet asks drivers to practice three work zone safety tips:

1. Pay Attention – Don't text, eat or perform any other activity while driving.
2. Respect Flaggers – Obey their guidance and watch their direction carefully.
3. Slow Down – Maintain a safe following distance; rear-end collisions are the most common work zone crash.

To read work zone stories and to stay current with KYTC's 2020 work zone awareness campaign, connect with the Cabinet on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#), and follow the #kywzaw, #vestedinwzsafety and #glowky conversations. Be sure to visit the KYTC's new work zone safety [webpage](#).

###

