

Work Zone Safety—Behind the Wheel

April 16, 2024

KYTC Statewide Safety Talk



National Work Zone Awareness Week is an initiative to increase roadway safety in and around work zones. Together, we can build a safety culture every day to prevent serious injuries and fatalities, regardless of where we work.

This safety talk is focused on safety for those driving through and working in work zones.

It's Dangerous Out There— Some work zone crash numbers for Kentucky last year alone—

- ▶ 1,251 crashes ▶ 42% of crashes involved distracted driving ▶ 25% had speeding as a factor
- ▶ 247 injuries ▶ 17 fatalities—14 driver/passengers, 2 workers, 1 pedestrian

As drivers—especially when operating state vehicles—we play a major part in the safety of everyone in roadway work zones, including workers, other motorists, and ourselves.

Why are work zones a concern?

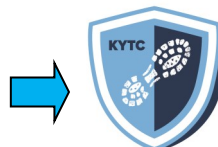
- ☒ Potential for changed traffic flow patterns, so even motorists who frequently pass through may encounter new challenges.
- ☒ Lane width restrictions or choke points
- ☒ Uncertainty in interpreting warning or directional signs, especially near interchanges and intersections under work.
- ☒ Distraction by the work, “rubbernecking”—people love to look at what is going on behind the cones or barrier wall—while ignoring what is in front of them.
- ☒ Speed reductions only observed by some can cause sudden and drastic speed differentials and accompanying sudden lane changing.
- ☒ Drivers are more distracted, more aggressive, less considerate, and seemingly more careless every day toward workers on roadway, pedestrians, and other motorists.

What should everyone do?

- ☒ Report Near-Miss incidents so we can learn and prevent them in the future.

How can the KYTC team help?

- ☒ Understand and remember—YOU and your attitude are the most important factor in your personal safety and effectiveness as a driver.
- ☒ Remember that you are setting an example for someone with your driving behavior—either good or bad.
- ☒ When driving a state vehicle—other drivers are looking at YOU and expect you to “walk the talk”
- ☒ Safety check, repair, maintain equipment and vehicles as if your life depends on it.
- ☒ Phone down, eyes up, focus on driving at all times but especially in work zones.
- ☒ Watch for others that are distracted or possibly confused by altered traffic flow or speed variations in work zones.
- ☒ Remember those workers “behind the cones” have families, and are your KYTC family too!



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