

Work Zone Awareness Week 2010

April 14, 2010

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Work Zone Awareness Week Background

- National campaign to increase public awareness of highway work zones and those killed in work zone crashes each year.
- Since 1999, VDOT has partnered with FHWA, ASHTO and the VTCA on this awareness campaign.
- As a state partner, VDOT organizes statewide, regional and local activities.
- 2010 Observance **April 19-23, 2010**

National Statistics

- Highway work zones are one of the most dangerous places to work in the U.S.
- Nationally, 720 workers and motorists were killed in highway work zones and more than 40,000 were injured in 2008.
- On average, 4 out of 5 people killed in work zone crashes are drivers, not highway workers.
- There is approximately one work zone fatality every 8.2 hours (3 per day) and one work zone injury every 9 minutes (160 per day).



Virginia Statistics

- **There were more than 2,000 crashes in work zones on state-maintained roadways in 2008.**
 - 7 people died
 - More than 1,000 injured
- **The following are the most common characteristics of work zone crashes in Virginia using 2008 statistics:**
 - Primary routes (39%)
 - Northern Virginia (1,002 crashes) – however, none of the work zone fatalities occurred in this region
 - Driver's age 20-29 (24% of crashes)
 - During daylight hours (68%)

Virginia Theme

- Encourage drivers to hang up their cell phone before driving through highway work zones.
- Texting while driving is a secondary traffic offense in Virginia.
- There is no offense for driving while talking on a cell phone.



Distracted Driving

- **Recent studies conducted by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute found that dialing or texting while driving leads to an increased risk of being involved in a crash or near-crash.**
- **Nearly 6,000 people died in 2008 as the result of distracted driving, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration,**
- **In July 2009, a new state law went into effect making text messaging while driving a secondary traffic offense.**

Observance Goals and Objectives

- **Increase awareness about the risks involved in working and driving in work zones**
- **Encourage safe driving and working habits in and around work zones.**
- **Memorialize highway workers who lost their lives in work zones in at least three media outlets during the campaign.**
- **Receive media coverage in at least one national outlet and at least three media outlets per district.**

External Outreach

Twitter Updates

- **VDOT will post daily messages to Twitter (@VaDOT) with links to campaign-related articles, photos, videos and work zone awareness facts.**
- **These messages have the potential to be “re-tweeted” to other Twitter users and will likely reach several thousand users.**

External Outreach

Evening Vigils

- **Held a vigil on April 6 in front of VDOT's Central Office in Richmond.**
- **Tuesday, April 20, 7 p.m. at the VDOT Workers' Memorial on I-64 east at Afton Mountain.**

External Outreach

Letter to the Editor

- **Public affairs drafted a letter to the editor that the districts will send to their local newspapers.**
- **The letters are signed by a maintenance worker from their district.**
- **This puts “a face” with the individuals under the hard hat and localizes the campaign for each district.**

External Outreach

Work Zone Awareness Web page

- Web page will address the work zone information needs of both transportation professionals and drivers.
 - **Transportation professionals:** Addresses technical work zone information such as the contact number for a VDOT work zone coordinator for questions about how a work zone should be set up.
 - **Drivers:**
 - Work zone awareness facts
 - Statistics
 - Downloadable materials
 - Links to VDOT Work Zone Awareness videos on YouTube
 - Access to the VDOT Workers Memorial Web page

External Outreach

Workers' Memorial Web Page

- **New page to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice as transportation professionals.**
 - **Updates ongoing; currently collecting information from families.**
 - **The Web page will be announced during Work Zone Awareness Week.**

Variable Message Signs

- **Work zone safety messages will be displayed on variable message signs in all districts during Work Zone Awareness Week.**

External Outreach

Welcome Center Displays

- **Virginia Tourism Corporation will create Work Zone Awareness displays at each location for the month of April.**
 - VDOT will provide hard hats, safety vests and traffic cones for their display.
- **VTC staff will wear t-shirts with the campaign graphic on the front (at their expense).**

Internal Outreach

Posters and Signs

- **Each district has posters featuring the national theme.**
- **VDOT staff to display these posters in area headquarters, residency and district offices during Work Zone Awareness Week.**
- **Work Zone Safety banners reused from past years.**

Internal Outreach

Video Message to Employees

- **Video featuring VDOT maintenance employees encouraging their colleagues to be safe in work zones will be available during Work Zone Awareness Week.**
- **The video will be available on InsideVDOT. Supervisors will be encouraged to show the video during safety meetings that week. Public affairs will distribute copies of the video as needed.**

Internal Outreach

“Go Orange” Day

- **Employees will be encouraged via InsideVDOT to “Go Orange” by wearing orange on April 20 for Work Zone Awareness Week.**
- **Pictures of “orange” employees will be posted on InsideVDOT.**
- **Go Orange Day coincides with the date of the Afton Mountain evening vigil.**

InsideVDOT

- **Work zone safety messages and stories will appear on InsideVDOT before and during Work Zone Awareness Week.**

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