

Work Zone Awareness Week 2010

April 14, 2010

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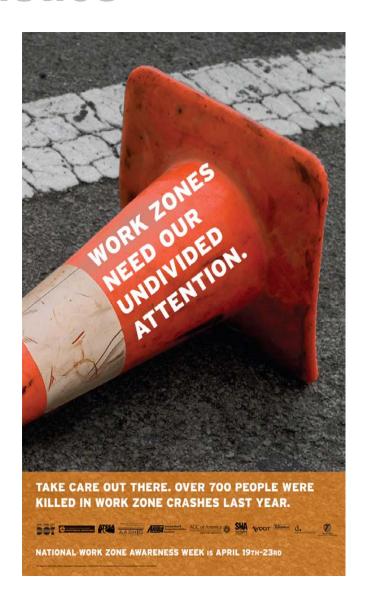
VDOT Chief of Communications

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.





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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.

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 "retweeted" to other Twitter users and will likely reach several thousand users.

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.

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.

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

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.

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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