



National Work Zone Awareness Week

National Work Zone Awareness Week is an annual spring campaign to kick off construction season and encourage safe driving through roadway work zones. The key message this year is “**Respect the zone so we all get home,**” driving home the importance of using caution while navigating through work zones, as commuters are likely to encounter:

- Highway or municipal workers
- Stopped vehicles on the roadway or curbside
- Flying debris, dust, and dirt
- Equipment moving around near the roadside

Work zones are temporary sites, but the actions of drivers and workers can last forever. Avoid work zone incidents with potentially deadly consequences by reviewing the following Comp Alliance safety tips this week recognizing work zone hazards:

- Follow the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) for work zone setup, continued use, and breakdown. Remember the “AT-BAT” acronym:
 - Advance warning (the setup of construction warning signs for vehicle traffic)
 - Transition area (when lane closures or narrowing of lanes are necessary)
 - Buffer zone (to separate vehicle traffic from the worksite)
 - Activity area (where the work is being completed and access points for trucks)
 - Termination
- The flagger is the most important person in the work zone to maintain order and safety. Provide flaggers with proper PPE including a reflective vest, hard hat, comfortable footwear, sunglasses if necessary, and a Stop/Slow paddle. Also, consider using an emergency warning device to alert workers should any stray car attempt to pull through the work zone. During the hot days, keep water nearby for hydration.
 - Flaggers need to be trained and should exercise the following characteristics:
 - Strong will and determination
 - Good communication skills to inform the public of the need to stop or slow down
 - Maintain a calm demeanor, should traffic pose a problem
 - Have a sense of control over the roadway

- Flaggers need to be positioned correctly. Keep out of the way of oncoming traffic until they have safely stopped. Do not position yourself like this:

Lastly, ensure equipment and trucks can be moved safely around the site without harming workers or pedestrians. Keep workers hydrated and allow for frequent breaks on hot or humid days. Construction workers also need to maintain proper PPE, including ear and eye protection, during the work zone operations. Have a competent person on-site to monitor work conditions, soil conditions if trenching or excavation is in order, and the condition of the workers, especially under adverse weather conditions.



Work zones can be a serious workplace injury exposure for many municipalities. Pay particular attention to the risks involved and adhere to strict safety standards. For further information on this safety week and to review additional safety materials about work zones, visit: <https://workzonesafety.org/public-awareness/work-zone-awareness-week/>