



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

You play a role in work zone safety.



National Work Zone Awareness Week

April 17–21, 2023

Work With Us

Source: Federal Highway Administration

For nearly a quarter of a century, National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) has been spotlighting critical safety and mobility issues in and around work zones. Every spring, the Federal Highway Administration and its stakeholders sponsor activities to bring nationwide attention to this important topic.

Work zones are critical for upgrading and maintaining our roadways. The national transportation system not only provides critical access to the traveling public, but it plays a key role in supporting the Nation's economy through the transport of vital goods and services. In support of this role, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) (Public Law 117-58) is providing significant resources and opportunities for States and local communities to improve safety and mobility for all road users and to ensure the integrity of America's roadway network.

NWZAW serves as an annual reminder that work zone safety and mobility for all road users—including motorists and vulnerable road users like pedestrians, bicyclists, and highway workers on foot—continues to be a significant issue that must be addressed. Additionally, work zone safety is a part of the U. S. Department of Transportation's **National Roadway Safety Strategy** to reduce serious injuries and deaths. Nationally, the rate of fatalities from all causes has not substantially improved over the last 10 years and continued to increase in 2021, including a 14-percent increase in work zone fatalities involving drivers and passengers.¹

For these reasons, NWZAW continues to be a call to action for everyone: **You play a role in work zone safety. Work with us.**

State agencies, local communities, and contractors all endeavor to keep road users safe when work zones are in place. Below are some ways that you can work with us and keep work zones safe.



- **Plan ahead.** Use traveler information sources on websites, social media, and apps to check for active work zones along your route. If possible, avoid traveling through work zones; otherwise, allow yourself extra time to anticipate possible delays and travel safely.



- **Put down your phone.** Workers are focused on doing their job to repair the roads; focus on your job to safely travel through the work zone by avoiding distractions.



- **Reduce your speed.** Transportation agencies may reduce speed limits in work zones to make it safer for you to navigate narrow lanes and lane shifts while keeping workers safe. Speed was a contributing factor in 32 percent of 2021 fatal work zone crashes.²



- **Look out for workers.** There is not always a lot of space between the work area and travel lanes, so please be considerate and slow down when you see workers.



- **Be aware of pedestrians and bicyclists.** Work zones often restrict where non-motorized road users can travel. In 2021, 173 people on foot and bicycles lost their lives in work zone crashes.³



- **Give space to large vehicles.**

Narrow lanes and unexpected lane shifts can be challenging for large vehicles to navigate. Help them out by giving them extra space. In 2021, 33 percent of fatal work zone crashes involved commercial motor vehicles (CMVs).⁶ Also, be on the lookout for large construction vehicles that may be entering and exiting the work area at slower speeds.



- **Stay alert.** Work zones sometimes cause slowdowns in unexpected places, so be prepared for sudden stops. In 2021, 24 percent of all fatal work zone crashes involved rear-end collisions.⁷

Fatal work zone crashes involving large trucks or buses increased significantly in 2021—from 210 fatal crashes in 2020 to 291 fatal crashes in 2021.⁴ This 39-percent increase is in stark contrast to the 2-percent increase in fatal work zone crashes not involving a large truck or bus.⁵

Visit the FHWA Work Zone Management website at <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/> and the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse website at www.workzonesafety.org for access to resources, guidance, and training.

TOTAL WORK ZONE TRAFFIC FATALITIES⁸

Based on National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data by person type



Drivers and passengers



Bicyclists and persons on foot



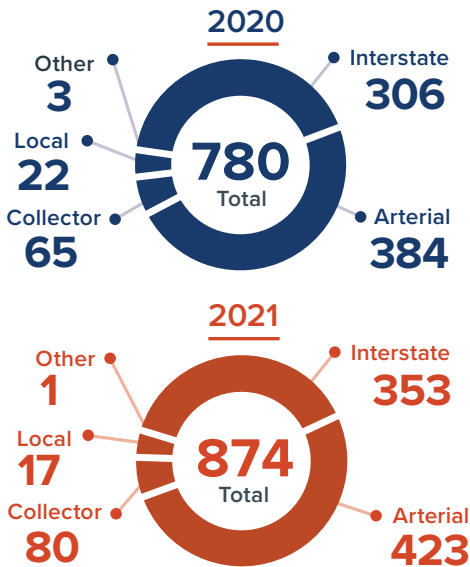
Others

Occupants of a nonmotor vehicle transport device and persons on personal conveyances

	2020	2021
Drivers and passengers	863	956
Bicyclists and persons on foot	685	778
Others	171	173
Occupants of a nonmotor vehicle transport device and persons on personal conveyances	7	5

TOTAL WORK ZONE FATAL TRAFFIC CRASHES⁹

Based on NHTSA FARS data by type of roadway



The following types of fatal work zone crashes changed significantly from 2020 to 2021:

	2020	2021
Involving a Rear-End Collision	158 20%	206 24%
Involving a CMV	210 27%	291 33%
Where Speeding Was a Factor	296 38%	278 32%

HIGHWAY WORKER OCCUPATIONAL FATALITIES IN ROAD CONSTRUCTION SITES¹⁰

Based on Bureau of Labor Statistics data

	2020	2021
Highway Worker Occupational Fatalities in Road Construction Sites	117	108

Trends: From 2020 to 2021, work zone fatalities increased by 10.8 percent, while overall roadway fatalities increased by 10.3 percent. There were increases in the percentages of fatal work zone crashes involving rear-end collisions, as well as those involving a CMV, and a decrease in fatal work zone crashes that involved speeding.¹¹

¹⁻⁸11 FARS 2020 final file and 2021 annual report file, NHTSA. FARS data shown here are from the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

¹⁰2020 and 2021 census of fatal occupational injuries, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with States, New York City, the District of Columbia, and Federal agencies.

Note: Figures are subject to revision, as values reported in the NHTSA FARS may be updated intermittently. Values shown here reflect what is reported by NHTSA as of April 2023.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

April 2023
FHWA-HOP-23-057