

LAW ENFORCEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION WORK ZONES

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THE REALITY OF WORK ZONES NATIONALLY!

- More than 42,000 traffic fatalities every year and more than 1,200 occur in work zones.
- Average of 3 work zone fatalities every day – one every 8.2 hours.
- Average 160 work zone injuries per day – one every 9 minutes.

THE REALITY OF WORK ZONES NATIONALLY!

- More police officers are killed by traffic than by bullets.
- Over the last ten years, **four times** more officers are killed when struck by vehicles than in accidental shootings.

U.S. GOVERNMENT SURVEY OF 46 STATES:

- 66% of all states use police officers for work zone projects.
- Only 20% provide general traffic management training.

THE REALITY OF WORK ZONE CRASHES IN OREGON!

- In the last 10 years in Oregon there were approximately:
 - 4,410 Work Zone Related Crashes
 - 71 Deaths
 - 195 Serious Injuries
 - 3,190 Injuries

THE REALITY OF WORK ZONE ***CONSTRUCTION EXPENDITURES*** ***IN OREGON!***

➤ In Construction Dollars, ODOT spent:

- **\$265 Million in 1997**

Compared to:

- **\$452 Million in 2006**

THE REALITY OF WORK ZONE ***ENFORCEMENT DOLLARS*** ***IN OREGON!***

- For Work Zone Enforcement, ODOT budgeted:
 - **\$1.2 Million** for the 03-05 biennium, and
 - **\$3.6 Million** for the 07-09 biennium

ROADWAY CONSTRUCTION

Bottom line:

- Roadway construction is on the rise and so is the exposure for work zone fatalities, injuries and crashes.
- Work zones are potentially dangerous to everyone involved, including police officers.

Common Pitfalls between Work Zone Construction and Enforcement

- Poor communication between Construction Project Managers and Enforcement.
- Lack of planning and coordination of traffic control responsibilities.
- Lack of up-to-date sharing of information.

ACTIVE PATROL VS. PATROL WITH LIGHTS PRIOR TO WZ?

- Oregon encourages officers to actively patrol our work zones.
- Oregon does not subscribe to the routine practice of officers sitting with lights on prior to the work zone to gain speed zone compliance.
- Studies have yet to show if one method is better than the other.

WHAT CAN AN OFFICER DO TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION?

- Know who the responsible Road Authority is and request a project briefing.
- Identify the Construction Project Manager/ Inspector, and a direct contact phone number. Communicate with them *regularly*.
- Ask to attend the Pre-Construction or Project Kick-Off meeting.
- Communicate with other officers within or outside your office who may also be patrolling the work zone.

WHAT ELSE?

- Identify and report hazards or uncomfortable driving conditions.
- Do not park within the work zone ***Transition*** or ***Buffer Zones***.
- Drive through the work zone in both directions prior to patrolling the area. Identify hazards and safe places to provide enforcement.
- Be the extra set of eyes and note any traffic backs-up beyond the Advance Warning signs. Place your vehicle in advance of the traffic queue and advance warning signs if necessary.

FEEDBACK

- What feedback do we receive or perceive from drivers who may be driving in an uncomfortable traffic situation?
 - Unexpected or extreme braking
 - Tire marks on pavement, curbs, or barriers
 - Displaced cones, drums or other devices
 - Letters or telephone calls
 - Road rage

THANK YOU!

Information Courtesy of:

Oregon Department of Transportation

US Department of Transportation

National Highway Transportation Safety Administration

Federal Highway Administration