

Work Zone Safety Awareness Week

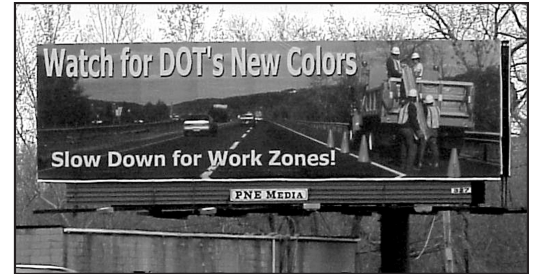
JULY 2000



Connecticut Department
of Transportation



State and local transportation agencies around the nation joined the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in a partnership with over 30 other organizations to sponsor National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week. The April 2-8, 2000, campaign sought to raise drivers' awareness of hazards encountered when driving through highway construction and maintenance work zones. Nearly 800 fatal and over 37,000 serious injury crashes occur annually in work zones. In addition, congestion and delays are on the rise across the nation in highway construction and maintenance work zones.



A successful team effort kicked off Connecticut's Work Zone Safety Awareness Week where the Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), Department of Motor Vehicles (ConnDMV), Department of Public Safety (ConnDPS), and their industry partners from the Connecticut Construction Industries Association (CCIA), construction unions, and the DOT maintenance union showcased "Operation Big Orange" to reporters. This police enforcement effort is designed to reduce speeds through construction and maintenance work zones. Reporters were also given an opportunity to see how Variable Message Signs and Highway Advisory Radio are used to alert motorists to highway work zones or traffic incidents.

ConnDOT purchased about \$180,000 worth of radio and television airtime for work zone safety messages. Forty-two radio stations aired 10-second spots following their traffic reports. Five television stations aired 30-second spots of the "At the Office" video. Another video, produced by North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and Carolina's Associated General Contractors (AGC), titled "A Sudden Change of Plans," was customized for Connecticut viewers and distributed to driving schools and shown at the Connecticut Bituminous Concrete Annual Conference. ConnDOT also announced and publicized Connecticut's adoption of the strong yellow-green worker safety vests. The American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA) took part in the observance by conducting Safety Workshops for ConnDOT's construction and maintenance employees.



According to the FHWA's Connecticut Division Office, the campaign was a coordinated educational, enforcement, and engineering effort. "We went a step beyond just using the national materials for this campaign." All the materials were customized for Connecticut, and information was displayed on billboards, rest areas, truck stops, schools, transit buses, public libraries, and the Internet.

Displaying Connecticut's strong yellow-green worker safety vest and cap are (l) James Sullivan, Commissioner, ConnDOT, and (r) Carl Gottshall, Assistant Division Administrator, FHWA, Connecticut Division Office.



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Other States related similar success stories from their events:

Alabama

The Statewide campaign combined information and handouts from the national program with the Alabama slogan "People Work There." Commercials and public service announcements ran throughout the week, and actual work zone stories were presented on morning news programs.

Arizona

The Arizona DOT (ADOT) held a press conference overlooking an interstate work zone in Phoenix. Two ADOT maintenance employees involved in a work zone crash related their stories to the media. Additionally, ADOT was successful in an outreach program to area schools where the video "A Sudden Change of Plans" was distributed, along with posters and fact sheets.

Georgia

In coordination with National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week, Georgia DOT unveiled a \$1 million public relations and advertising campaign, using the slogan "Slow Down. It Won't Kill You." This campaign is designed to inform motorists of the dangers they face while driving through work zones and of the danger speeding motorists present to construction and maintenance workers.



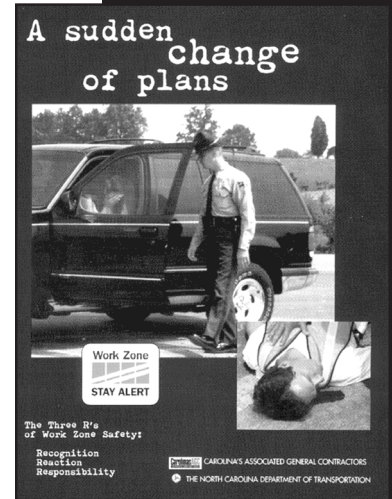
Motorists are informed about National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week.

Maryland

The Maryland State Highway Administration and the Maryland Transportation Authority partnered on an event and sponsored a number of outreach sessions at public schools throughout the State. During these sessions, the video "A Sudden Change of Plans" was shown and discussed. Some presenters had personal experience with work zone accidents. Other presenters included traffic engineers and construction personnel.

Virginia

The Virginia DOT (VDOT) launched a comprehensive campaign for its third straight year. In partnership with the Virginia Road and Transportation Builders Association, VDOT coordinated a campaign targeting drivers and highway workers with the message of team work in highway construction zones. NASCAR driver Jeff Burton was featured in radio and TV public service announcements with a safety message. Safety breaks held at rest areas and at park and ride lots for the public were a big success. VDOT provided refreshments and prepared displays, banners, and handouts for these events. Letters to the editors from VDOT resident engineers and district administrators were printed in weekly and daily newspapers around the State. In addition to its State campaign, VDOT hosted the Press Conference of National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week at a hotel near the site of the Springfield interchange where major highway construction is underway.



The video "A Sudden Change of Plans" was produced by NCDOT and Carolina's AGC.

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