

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Minnesotans need to slow down for roadside workers

April 10 is Work Zone Safety Go Orange Day

ST. PAUL, MINN. (April 10, 2019) – Slow down when you see orange and help keep Minnesota’s highway workers, construction crews, utility teams and others working along roadsides safe as the 2019 construction season ramps up.

That was the message Wednesday as Minnesota employers, government entities and traffic safety-focused associations gathered to promote Work Zone Safety Go Orange Day, one of several efforts focused on keeping workers safe. The event, which included real-life stories from roadside workers and others and a work zone safety demonstration, took place at the Washington County Public Works facility in Stillwater.

“When you’re driving and see orange cones and work zone signs, remember you are driving through someone’s office,” said Paul Aasen, president, Minnesota Safety Council. “Slow down, get off the phone and focus on safe driving for yourself, and for those who work on and around our roads.”

Work Zone Safety Go Orange Day falls in the middle of this year’s National Work Zone Awareness Week, an annual spring campaign to coincide with the start of road construction season. The event included representatives of the Minnesota Safety Council, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Xcel Energy, Great River Energy, Washington County Public Works and law enforcement agencies.

MnDOT reports that more than 200 active work zones are scheduled throughout the state this construction season. In addition, utility crews and others are regularly working alongside Minnesota thoroughfares. A work zone is defined as any area where highway construction, maintenance or utility work is being done. Work zones are identified by warning signs, signals, barriers, pavement markings and flaggers.

Each year in the U.S., a work zone crash occurs once every 5.4 minutes, according to the Federal Highway Administration. Every day, 70 work zone crashes occur that result in at least one injury. Every week, 12 work zone crashes occur that result in at least one fatality. In Minnesota, during the past three years, there were 31 fatalities and 123 serious injuries in work zones.

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The Minnesota Safety Council is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to preventing injuries on the road, at work, at home, and in the community. For more information, see www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org.

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