



Saint Louis County

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NEWS RELEASE

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National Work Zone Awareness Week reminds motorists to use caution

It has been a long winter, but construction season is fast approaching. Orange barrels, vests and cones will soon return to streets and highways throughout the region. With construction workers getting back to work, the St. Louis County Public Works Department is calling attention to National Work Zone Awareness Week, April 7 to 11. This year's theme is "*Work Zone Speeding: A Costly Mistake*".

In the last decade in northeast Minnesota, on average, one person was killed in a work zone crash nearly every year. The good news is work zone crashes resulting in a fatality or injury have been trending downward over this same period. Most of these serious work zone crashes are rear-end type crashes that occur in daylight and at high speed locations between two or more vehicles. Contrary to common belief, it is the motor vehicle occupants – not construction workers – who are most likely to be killed or injured in a work zone crash.

"Distracted or inattentive driving, combined with driving at an illegal or unsafe speed, are the top contributing factors to these serious work zone crashes," said Victor Lund, St. Louis County Traffic Engineer.

To raise awareness about the importance of work zone safety, St. Louis County will be deploying portable message signs on some county highway segments that will be under construction this summer.

Simple tips to remember while driving through work zones: Pay attention, slow down and put down your phone – work zones can change on a daily basis. Heed the construction signs – they are there for a reason. And lastly, be patient and expect delays, especially during peak travel times.

To learn about any upcoming St. Louis County road construction projects or to sign up for email updates, visit stlouiscountymn.gov/construction.

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