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CDOT Wants 'Cone Zones' Safer For Workers

☑ Poll: [Do you think people slow down enough in construction zones?](#)



[Paul Day](#)

Reporting

(CBS4) DENVER On Monday morning, [Roger Baxter](#) became the fifth worker with the Colorado Department of Transportation to be hurt or killed while on-the-job in just the last 28 months.

Baxter, 56, was hit by a semi-truck while cleaning up debris along Interstate 70 about 4 miles east of Watkins.

CDOT workers say their safety is jeopardized by careless drivers.

"They're on phones, smoking cigarettes, playing the radio," said a CDOT worker. "They're not paying attention."

Since June 2004, three workers have been killed and two seriously injured in on-the-job traffic crashes.

"You put a policeman out here and the traffic will slow down and pay attention," said Tony Caruso, a CDOT worker. "It's like having a principal in a schoolyard."

He thinks police should be required, in addition to flaggers, to be at every road project.

His co-worker disagrees.

"I've been in work zones personally where there was police and they never got the same respect either," said Trinidad Urrutia, a CDOT worker.

CDOT says safety improvements have been made since an employee was killed last summer. Everyone's now reminded to work defensively and assume drivers aren't paying attention.

"We just need everybody to be a little bit more patient, more cautious," said Mary Wilkinson, a veteran flagger. "Be aware of everything that's going on because it's very dangerous out here."

Baxter was still in critical condition Tuesday night. The truck driver from Kansas who hit him faces a charge of careless driving.