

Spotlight on work zone safety

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As spring gets into full swing, expect to see more traffic cones and work zones.

In fact, there will be 50 construction projects on the Thruway alone and drivers are encouraged be smart while driving through them.

"When motorists are approaching a highway maintenance or construction zone, please pay attention and slow down," said New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Astrid Glynn.

"Slow down, put your cell phone away, and be observant. People who work and travel in these work zones deserve to go home to their families each and every night," said New York State Trooper Major David Salmon.

"It is life or death for many of our workers out there," said State Thruway Authority Executive Director Michael Fleischer.

According to the DOT, 139 people were hurt and seven people were killed in work zone accidents last year. Two more have been injured already this year.

"All of those incidents could have been avoided if drivers had simply taken a little more care," Glynn said.

The DOT is sending that message through a series of public service announcements centered around the family of a Binghamton highway worker who was killed in a 2005 crash.

"Whether it be an accident scene or whether it be a work zone, it's imperative that people first and foremost slow down and be more cognizant of what's going on around them," Salmon said.

If they aren't, drivers run an increased risk of getting a ticket.

The DOT says the state budget is funding 100 more troopers for work zone enforcement. It also provides about \$8 million to increase awareness and improve safety, making sure safe travel is no accident.

