

# **PennDOT Recognizes National Work Zone Awareness Week**

To: POLITICAL EDITORS

Contact: Alison Wenger of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, +1-717-783-8800

HARRISBURG, Pa., April 2 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- With another construction season approaching, PennDOT is reminding motorists to slow down and exercise caution when traveling through highway work zones. Work zone safety will receive increased focus during National Work Zone Awareness Week, which runs April 2-6.

"For your safety and the safety of highway workers, use extreme caution when traveling through work zones," said PennDOT Secretary Allen D. Biehler, P.E. "There were 30 fatalities in these well-marked highway work areas and three of those deaths included highway workers. Those lives could have been saved and crashes could be prevented if motorists follow safe-driving habits."

According to PennDOT, there were 1,888 crashes in work zones in 2005, the most recent year for which data is available. Aggressive driving -- such as speeding and tailgating -- and distracted drivers were the biggest causes of those crashes. Nearly half of the crashes were rear-end collisions.

PennDOT reminds motorists that Pennsylvania law says drivers must turn on their automobile's headlights when traveling through work zones where signs are in place telling them to do so. Motorists who do not use their headlights could be subject to a \$25 fine. Also under the law, fines for certain traffic violations, such as speeding and DUI, are doubled for active work zones. Motorists caught driving 11 miles per hour or more above the posted speed limit in an active work zone automatically will lose their license for 15 days.

To enhance work-zone safety, motorists are urged to always buckle up, drive the posted work-zone speed limit, stay alert, maintain a safe distance around vehicles and use four-way flashers when stopped or traveling slowly.

CONTACT: Alison Wenger

(717) 783-8800

SOURCE Pennsylvania Department of Transportation