

# Work Zone Awareness week declared by legislature

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The Tennessee Legislature has officially declared April 2 through April 6, 2007 as Work Zone Awareness Week. The resolution was supported by Governor Phil Bredesen as part of the state's effort to improve safety for motorists and workers in Tennessee's interstate and highway construction and maintenance work zones.

"Work zones can be dangerous areas for both motorists and workers," said Senate Transportation Committee Chairman Jim Tracy. "In the past four years, more than one hundred men, women and children have died in work zone crashes. That's why I felt it was so important to pass this resolution and bring greater attention to the importance of work zone safety."

The resolution was also sponsored by House Transportation Committee Chairman Phillip Pinion.

"In 2005, there were more than 5,000 traffic crashes in Tennessee work zones. That same year, Robert Fish, a TDOT maintenance worker was struck by a vehicle and killed while working along the side of the road," said Chairman Pinion. "Work zone signs and reduced speed limits are there to protect all of us. When you approach a work zone, slow down and pay attention. It could save a life."

The Tennessee Department of Safety reports that in 2005 there were 5,639 traffic crashes in construction and maintenance work zones in Tennessee, 13 of which were fatal.

"Construction zones are constantly changing, so it's important for motorists to slow down and pay attention to signs in the work zone," said TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely. "Statistics show the majority of work zone crashes are due to drivers who fail to obey signs, traffic controls and speed limits or are distracted. It's up to each of us to be conscious of what we are doing when driving in a work zone for our own safety and the safety of the men and women working there."

Nicely added that TDOT is always looking for new programs and initiatives that will help make work zones safer, such as TDOT's "Get in the Zone" program.

Statistics show teenagers are more likely than any other age group to be involved in a work zone crash. According to the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, an organization dedicated to traffic safety in the work place, a teenager is killed and seven other teens are injured every three days in a work zone in the U.S.

TDOT's new "Get in the Zone" program focuses on teaching teenage drivers the importance of staying alert and being safe in work zones. More than 1,000 students across Tennessee have already participated in a TDOT "Get in the Zone" presentation and over 1,000 Tennessee high schools have been provided with **Get in the Zone** materials for classroom use.

For more information on TDOT's "Get in the Zone" program, visit [www.tn.gov/tdot/wzsafety/](http://www.tn.gov/tdot/wzsafety/).

TDOT reminds all motorists that taking these three simple steps can mean the difference between life and death:

- When you see the orange signs, be alert for changing conditions ahead.
- Slow down and expect the unexpected. Pay attention to your surroundings. You may encounter lane shifts, construction vehicles entering and leaving the roadway, or changed speed limits.
- Minimize distractions! Avoid changing radio stations and using mobile phones while driving in the work zone.

A report showing 2005 work zone crashes in Tennessee by county follows.

## Tennessee 2005 Work Zone Crashes By County

County	Total Crashes	County	Total Crashes
ANDERSON	68	LINCOLN	8
BEDFORD	7	LOUDON	32
BENTON	2	MC MINN	32
BLEDSON	1	MC NAIRY	5
BLOUNT	37	MACON	2

BRADLEY	53
CAMPBELL	33
CANNON	3
CARROLL	10
CARTER	16
CHEATHAM	11
CHESTER	11
CLAIBORNE	30
CLAY	1
COCKE	14
COFFEE	67
CROCKETT	5
CUMBERLAND	43
DAVIDSON	1,559
DECATUR	3
DE KALB	23
DICKSON	14
DYER	30
FAYETTE	11
FENTRESS	4
FRANKLIN	17
GIBSON	11
GILES	6
GRAINGER	5
GREENE	16
GRUNDY	24
HAMBLÉN	33
HAMILTON	331
HANCOCK	0
HARDEMAN	7
HARDIN	5
HAWKINS	11
HAYWOOD	6
HENDERSON	13
HENRY	3
HICKMAN	2
HOUSTON	2
HUMPHREYS	5
JACKSON	1
JEFFERSON	8
JOHNSON	5
KNOX	1,008
LAKE	0
LAUDERDALE	6
LAWRENCE	15
LEWIS	1

MADISON	157
MARION	2
MARSHALL	2
MAURY	17
MEIGS	9
MONROE	3
MONTGOMERY	188
MOORE	0
MORGAN	5
OBION	1
OVERTON	6
PERRY	0
PICKETT	0
POLK	7
PUTNAM	14
RHEA	16
ROANE	13
ROBERTSON	35
RUTHERFORD	220
SCOTT	4
SEQUATCHIE	2
SEVIER	61
SHELBY	691
SMITH	25
STEWART	19
SULLIVAN	44
SUMNER	109
TIPTON	10
TROUSDALE	5
UNICOI	2
UNION	1
VAN BUREN	8
WARREN	8
WASHINGTON	71
WAYNE	1
WEAKLY	7
WHITE	0
WILLIAMSON	68
WILSON	132
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,639</b>