



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 12, 2022

National Work Zone Awareness Week runs April 11-15 *'Work Zones are a Sign to Slow Down'*

DEMING – On Apr. 11, 2022, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) came together to celebrate National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) April 11 - 15. This event was held to remind drivers to pay attention as they approach and drive through or past work zones so both motorists and roadway workers remain safe.

Drivers are urged to slow down, eliminate distractions, don't tailgate, stay calm, be patient and move over to avoid roadway workers and their equipment. This year's National Work Zone Awareness Week theme is *'Work Zones are a Sign to Slow Down.'*

"In the El Paso District in 2021, there were 907 traffic crashes in work zones, resulting in 3 fatalities and 13 serious injuries. In El Paso, there were 777 traffic crashes in work zones, resulting in 1 fatality and 9 serious injuries." said Director of Transportation Operations Eduardo Perales, P.E., TxDOT El Paso. "Speeding is one of the most common offenses our crews witness. Just weeks ago, El Paso Police cited 5 drivers for speeding in less than 45 minutes on our Montana project in far east El Paso. The top speed: 131 miles per hour in a 45-mph construction zone!"

"Just last month, I attended an NMDOT State Transportation Commission meeting in Roswell where our District 2 Engineer presented a video in memory of one of his maintenance workers who was hit from behind and killed while performing what we would be described as routine maintenance. In the fall of 2021 four of my employees were hit and injured, though luckily not killed while repairing cable barrier, another routine maintenance activity." said District Engineer Trent Doolittle. "Every day our employees risk their lives to ensure the travelling public gets to their destinations safely."

Both New Mexico State Police, Lieutenant Charles Madrid and Texas Department of Public Safety, Sergeant Marc Couch, reminded drivers of the Move Over/Slow Down law, which requires drivers to move over a lane or reduce their speed to 20 mph below the posted limit when they see flashing blue or amber lights on a DOT vehicle,

emergency vehicle or tow truck stopped on the roadside. Not doing so can result in a fine of up to \$2,000.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, between [2018 and 2019, fatal crashes in work zones increased by 11 percent despite a 2 percent decrease in crashes outside of work zones.](#) Most of these work zone fatalities were due to rear-end collisions.

Nationally, work zone crashes occur at an average of one every 5.8 minutes. The top three causes of work zone crashes are following too closely, inattentive and/or distracted driving, and excessive speed.

The NMDOT and TxDOT is committed to the safety of the traveling public and appreciates your cooperation during roadway construction zones. For updated information visit: New Mexico Department of Transportation at www.nmroads.com or call 511 or 1-800-432-4269. Visit: Texas Department of Transportation work zones and closures visit <http://drivetexas.org> or www.txdot.gov

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