

# **ROAD COMMISSION** **for OAKLAND COUNTY**

## **PRESS RELEASE PRESS RELEASE**



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### **DRIVE LIKE YOU WORK HERE: RCOC RECOGNIZES NATIONAL WORK-ZONE AWARENESS WEEK**

**Beverly Hills, MI** — As the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) gears up for road construction season, it joins road agencies from across the country in recognizing National Work-Zone Awareness Week, April 8-12.

“With the return of the familiar orange barrels, motorists must learn to unplug from distractions as they enter work zones,” RCOC Managing Director Dennis Kolar said. “Especially when workers are present,” Kolar noted, “extra attention is needed to keep everybody safe. With the recent increase in funding, this will be a record year for the number of work zones within Oakland County. More work zones means drivers can expect to find themselves within those zones more frequently.”

In 2018, motorists struck RCOC work zones three times in less than a month. One incident involved a motorist slamming into an RCOC pickup truck on M-5 in Farmington Hills causing it to flip over and sending two employees to the hospital. Each incident takes a toll on both motorists and employees, and most damage Road Commission equipment that is not easily replaceable.

But, it’s not just road workers who are in danger in work-zone incidents. According to the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), more than 85 percent of all people killed in highway work-zone crashes are motorists and their passengers, not highway workers. Michigan experienced 17 fatal work-zone traffic crashes and 75 serious injury accidents in 2016.

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## **WORK ZONE AWARENESS WEEK / 2 OF 2**

“The safety of our employees, contractors and motorists is our foremost concern,” Kolar said. “While many factors contribute to deadly work-zone crashes, driver behavior plays a huge role. We ask county motorists to slow down, buckle up, drive sober, pay attention, stay off their phones and, at all times, drive as if their lives depend on it.”

In Michigan, most work zones are posted at 45 m.p.h. where workers are present. Motorists speeding in work zones are subject to doubled fines and additional points against their driver’s licenses. Causing the injury of another person in a work zone is a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in prison and \$1,000 in fines. Causing the death of a person in a work zone is a felony punishable by up to 15 years in prison and \$7,500 in fines.

“Slow down in work zones,” Kolar said. “The life you save may be your own.”

The theme for National Work-Zone Awareness Week 2019 is “Drive Like You Work Here.”

*The National Work Zone Awareness Week campaign began in 2000 as an initiative of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), American Traffic-Safety Services Association (ATSSA) and the Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (ASHTO) to build public awareness of work-zone safety.*

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