# WORK ZONE SAFETY Talking Points: TEXAS

**The Importance of Work Zone Safety in Texas**

* Texas ranks first in the country on the Global Groundwork Index[[1]](#footnote-1) for infrastructure project investment. Texas also ranks first in the country for fatal work zone crashes involving commercial motor vehicles[[2]](#footnote-2) in the state’s many work zones.
* Texas has more interstate mileage than any other state, and heavily relies on its vast multi-modal freight system and commercial motor vehicle (CMV) driver population to move key agricultural commodities across the U.S., and logistically serve Texas’ big energy sector. With the state’s continued expansion and year-round construction season, more passenger vehicles and CMV drivers traveling through Texas roadways will likely encounter active work zones at any time, any day of the week.
* The leading causes of work zone crashes statewide is speeding and distracted driving. In Texas, of the 4,380 crashes resulting in fatalities in 2021, 10% had distracted driving listed as a contributing factor and 28% were not wearing a seat belt[[3]](#footnote-3). All of these factors are entirely preventable.

**Sharing the Road**

* Work zones present challenges for truck drivers across Texas – narrowed lanes, sudden stops, traffic pattern shifts, and uneven road surfaces can lead to crashes and fatalities if they are not prepared and alert. Plan your route, reduce speed, stay alert, and do your part while traveling through Texas work zones.
* On average, large trucks are overrepresented in work zone crashes. In 2021, over 15% of work zone crashes involved Commercial Motor Vehicles (CMV)[[4]](#footnote-4). And in Texas, there were more than 24,000 crashes involving a CMV, resulting in 1,106 fatalities in 2021 alone[[5]](#footnote-5).
* Large blind spots, long stopping distances, and size constraints make maneuvering large trucks and buses in work zones particularly challenging. Passenger vehicles should be mindful that CMV drivers need to take extra precaution when driving through these areas.
* Pay close attention to road workers and flaggers – give them extra room, always slow when approaching them, and be prepared to stop if necessary.

**How to Drive Safely Through Work Zones**

* There are plenty of resources available to research your routes and check for upcoming work zones. Make sure you know of any road work before embarking on your route and when possible, use detours to avoid having to pass through these areas.
* Reduce speed while traveling through Texas work zones, paying close attention to signs and signals.
* Be aware of passenger vehicle drivers around you, who may not be aware of commercial vehicle driving challenges, including large blind spots, and longer stopping distances.
* Be prepared to stop or slow unexpectedly, and when doing so, activate emergency flashers to alert vehicles behind you.
* When approaching lane closures, move into the open lane as soon as possible – pay close attention to vehicles around you that could be in your blind spot.
* Rear-end crashes are common in work zones – obey all speeds, avoid distractions, and maintain extra space between your vehicle and the one in front of you at all times.

**Texas’ Active Work Zones**

* Forty-seven percent of fatal work zone crashes involving CMVs occurred on an interstate highway in Texas[[6]](#footnote-6). As you travel through Texas, it’s critical for all drivers – both CMV and passenger vehicle drivers – to share the road safely, particularly as they approach or enter work zones.
* Interstate 35 is one of Texas’ most highly trafficked roadways and runs through congested metro areas in San Antonio, Austin, and Dallas. On I-35, obey signs and signals, reduce speed, and pay attention when driving through all work zones, including the following[[7]](#footnote-7):

Loop 410 North to FM 3009 and FM 1103 in San Antonio

I-635/I-30 interchange from U 75 to I-30 in Dallas

SH 170 to I-35/I-35W Split in Dallas/Fort Worth

I-45 from downtown Houston to Beltway 8 North

I-20 between Midland and Odessa

**Where to get more information**

* The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) provides work zone safety [shareable materials](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads/work-zone-safety-shareable-material) and [safety tips](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads/work-zones-safety-tips) on the [*Our Roads, Our Safety®*](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads) website.
* TxDOT also offers Texas-specific [downloadable resources](https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/media-center/psas/distracted-driving/work-zones.html#:~:text=Work%20Zones,-Texas%20Department%20of&text=In%20recognition%20of%20National%20Work,construction%20and%20maintencance%20work%20zones.) as part of their work zone *Be Safe Drive Smart* safety awareness campaign page.

1. Texas Economic Development Corporation (TxEDC) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Crash Records Information System [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Crash Records Information System [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Motor Carrier Management Information System (MCMIS) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Crash Records Information System [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Project Tracker [↑](#footnote-ref-7)