



**Delaware Department of Transportation
Press Release – For Immediate Release**

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**“Slow Down! We Have Families Too”
Observing Work Zone Safety Awareness
*National Work Zone Awareness Week is April 3-7***

Dover: During a press conference held today at Biddles Toll Plaza and site of the US 301 construction project, in observance of National Work Zone Awareness Week, Department of Transportation Secretary (DelDOT) Jennifer Cohan and others informed attendees on the importance of observing extra caution while traveling through work zones. National Work Zone Awareness Week is held in early April each year at the traditional start of construction season, when the number of workers on our nation’s roadways increases. The theme of this year’s Delaware awareness campaign is “Slow Down! We Have Families Too.”

The National Work Zone Awareness Week began in 1999, when the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA), and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) signed a Memorandum of Agreement pledging to increase public awareness of work zone safety issues through a national media campaign. Since then, awareness has continued to grow, with state agencies and other organizations sponsoring high-visibility education and outreach initiatives.

Proclaiming the week of April 3, in Delaware to be National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week, Governor Carney encouraged all citizens to be aware of the importance of safe driving habits in highway work zones. “As warm weather arrives,

work zones become increasingly familiar sights along Delaware roads,” Governor John Carney said. “But we should not let familiarity become complacency. Even though many of us will be driving through work zones every day, we should continue to keep our eyes wide open and obey the posted rules of the road. Lives depend upon it.”

“As DelDOT continues its efforts to maintain and improve Delaware’s transportation infrastructure, I personally urge everyone to slow down and pay careful attention when driving through work zones,” said DelDOT Secretary Jennifer Cohan. “By paying attention, slowing down and obeying the guidance of workers in our work zones that diligence not only protects the men and women who work alongside traffic it protects you, as drivers and your passengers.”

“Work zones are where moms and dads and sons and daughters are making the improvements that will make our driving experience safer and smoother,” says Jim Lardear, Director of Public and Government Affairs at AAA Mid-Atlantic. “When it comes to keeping highway workers and drivers safe, we’re all in this together. Slow down, pay attention to advisories and don’t drive distracted.”

Although highway workers are often among the victims of such crashes, it's important for drivers to understand that four out of five victims of work zone crashes are actually drivers or their passengers. Generally, crashes occur when drivers speed through a work zone or do not pay attention to the changing road conditions and run into other vehicles, highway equipment or safety barriers, or drive off the roadway completely. In a typical five-day work week, an average of seven motorists and one worker are killed nationwide. The primary causes of work zone crashes are following too closely and inattentive driving.

"Workers put themselves in harm's way to help the rest of us by building and maintaining the roads and bridges that get us where we need to go as safely as possible," said Adam Weiser, DelDOT's Manager of Traffic Safety. "When it comes to keeping highway workers and drivers safe, we're all in this together. While DelDOT requires its employees to get regular work zone safety training, our workers want to remind drivers of potential upcoming hazards within work zones. We ask motorists to slow down when they approach and travel through a work zone and pay close attention to the signing and channelization devices. Help keep us safe, to keep you safe."

Some simple tips for improving work zone safety include:

- * When you see the “orange and black,” be extra cautious.
- * Warning signs will let you know what to expect.
- * Barrels or cones will delineate your path of travel.
- * Flag persons will help direct you along the way.
- * Avoid distractions.
- * Don’t tailgate.
- * Don’t change lanes.
- * Slow down and expect the unexpected.

Ken Cimino, On-site Project Outreach Coordinator updated those assembled the significance of the location of the event. “With extensive work underway on the new US301 interchange project here at Biddles Plaza, Work Zone Safety Awareness week is also an opportunity to provide an update on this important project. All seven of these projects are scheduled for completion by December 2018. Currently, each section of the project is on schedule or ahead of schedule with no major issues to date. It's an honor and exciting to have been assigned to such a unique project. The scope and size of the US 301 Mainline Project is a once in a lifetime project for many of us here in the great State of Delaware.”

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