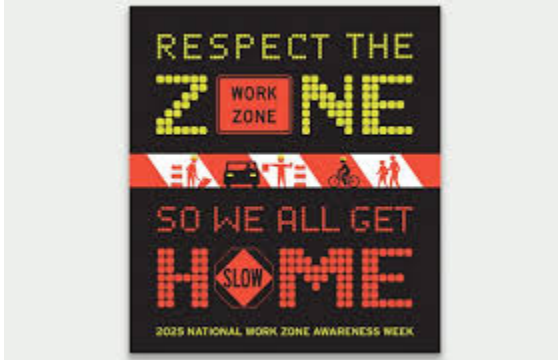


TOOLBOX TALK #26

KEEP WORKZONE CREWS PROTECTED



In 2022, 891 people were killed in work zone crashes, according to Injury Facts – an online source of preventable death and injury statistics compiled by the National Safety Council. Of those fatalities, 528 occurred in construction work zones. (Others included maintenance and utility zones.) Work zone deaths reached a high in 2022, at 1,186 the database indicates.

One way to help prevent these deaths: Set up an effective temporary traffic control zone to ensure workers are protected. “Each jobsite should have a traffic control officer or competent person onsite to ensure setup, tear down and repositioning of the work zone occurs in accordance with the site-specific traffic control plan,” the Laborers’ Health and Safety Fund of North America say. “It is their job to ensure proper tear down and repositioning are performed inside the work zone safely and performed from properly marked vehicles.”

Here are other devices OSHA says to use when setting up a temporary traffic control zone:

- **Signs.** “Standard highway signs for information, speed limits and work zones will assist drivers in identifying designated traffic paths.”
- **Cones, barrels, barricades and delineator posts.** These devices will “instruct drivers to follow a path away from where work is being done.”
- **Concrete, water, sand or collapsible barriers; crash cushions; and truck-mounted attenuators.** These will limit “motorist intrusions” into the work zone.
- **Flaggers.** “Flaggers should use SLOW/STOP paddles, paddles with lights, or flags (flags should only be used in an emergency). “These workers also need to be outfitted in high-visibility clothing.
- **Lighting.** “Lighting for workers on foot and equipment operators is to be at least 5 foot-candles or greater.” And remember to eliminate as much as possible glare that may be affecting workers and drivers.