

Everyone is a Pedestrian:

For A Safe Path Through Work Zones

"Don't Miss Your Cues!"



Header Images: Getty

Most pedestrians walk familiar routes routinely – such as from a transit stop to work, or from work to a favorite lunch spot. But this familiarity can cause complacency that leads to problems for pedestrians when they find their path impacted by a construction or maintenance work zone.

According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), pedestrian fatalities in work zones decreased from 178 in 2023 to 156 in 2024.* The data typically indicate that over three-fourths of all "on foot" fatalities are pedestrians. Distracted behaviors such as talking on the phone, texting, and using in-ear devices can cause pedestrians to lose sight of the surroundings.

Work zones can be dangerous for pedestrians due to the potential for pathway obstructions, protruding objects, tripping hazards, modified street crossings, vehicular traffic, and construction equipment. Pedestrians share the responsibility for their personal safety on the road, especially in work zones. It is important to know that work zone signs, temporary route guidance, and accessible devices are the best cues to safe travel for every pedestrian!



Image: ATSSA

It is very important for pedestrians to be alert and stay on the delineated path through the work zone! Work zone traffic control devices are installed to provide positive guidance to pedestrians and separate them from motorists and construction activity. Barriers, barricades, distinctive orange signs, white signs, drums, cones, and fluorescent yellow-green signs define the SAFE way to travel through the area, both for drivers as well as pedestrians!

The Pedestrian's First Safety Rule in Work Zones



It's always safest to simply avoid the construction area. If not practical to avoid the area completely, the pedestrian must be especially attentive and careful when using temporary routes that divert or detour pedestrians around the work zone.

Work zones can be particularly hazardous to pedestrians with visual or mobility impairments. Public entities are required to maintain the accessibility features present prior to construction. Where exposed to adjacent construction, traffic, or other hazards, you may encounter a pedestrian barricade or channelization device. These devices are designed to be continuous, stable, and non-flexible. It's very important to obey ALL work zone signs, always follow designated temporary pathways, and never enter a work space.

Image: ATSSA

*Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)

Work Zone Safety Tips for Every Pedestrian to Follow/Comply With/Adhere To/Observe

- **Be alert and attentive.** Construction vehicles often move suddenly and quickly. Even though work zone personnel and traffic control devices may be in place to guide the pedestrian away from hazards, everyone in a work zone must still be alert to the possible hazards posed by moving equipment and unexpected conditions.
- **Watch for approaching drivers.** Drivers may not see pedestrians, especially if they are focused on traffic conditions and safely navigating the work zone. Observe oncoming traffic closely to ensure conditions are safe before crossing live traffic lanes, with particular focus on vehicular traffic at temporary crosswalks.
- **Review project information and understand project communications ahead of time.** Owners and contractors regularly communicate project information through a variety of sources, including press releases, social media platforms, portable changeable message signs, and project websites. Pedestrians should check project information frequently to best prepare for safe travel in and around the work zone.
- **Be especially aware at night.** Never assume a motorist sees you at night, as their visibility is reduced. Pedestrians must be even more attentive at night to ensure their path through the work zone is safe and hazard free. Pedestrians should wear visible clothing (lighter in color) when walking at night.
- **Watch where you're going!** Construction work may be fascinating to watch, but remember that your first responsibility is to get through the work zone as safely as possible.

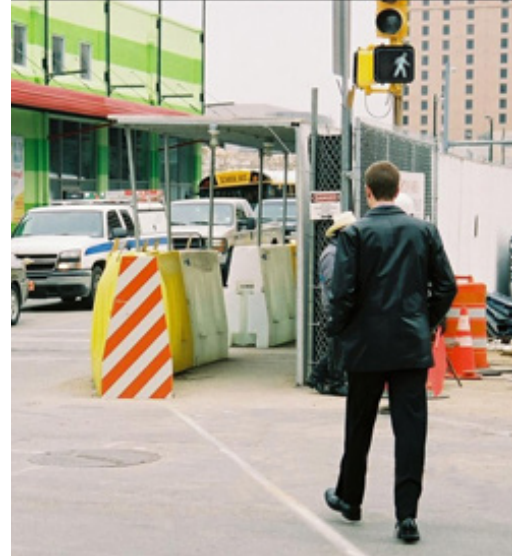


Image: ATSSA

Safety Cues to Watch For in Work Zones



Image: MUTCD

- **White Work Zone Signs with Black Lettering** – Regulatory signs indicate requirements that users must follow in the work zone, such as a sidewalk is closed and a detour must be taken. These signs represent established laws or regulations where violations can result in a citation.
- **Orange Work Zone Signs with Black Lettering** – Communicate the situation to both drivers and pedestrians, provide route guidance, and may provide a warning for potential hazards.
- **Traffic Control Devices** – To provide clear delineation of the pedestrian path through the work zone, some projects include longitudinal channelizing devices such as plastic water-filled barriers, fencing with wooden or metal frames, and/or barricades. Some use temporary traffic barriers to channelize road users while also protecting the work space.

Pedestrians who ignore work zone traffic safety cues are at risk of getting injured or killed by construction activity or vehicular traffic that may not be expecting the presence of pedestrians. Remember, the key to safety is to be alert, and **DON'T MISS YOUR SAFETY CUES!**

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