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Work zone crashes are costly in many ways

Road work is in full swing across Kansas. Some projects are short-term, some will last until winter and beyond, but all of them require safety to be priority.

The Kansas Department of Transportation reminds motorists to follow all traffic regulations in work zones and that these regulations, including lowered speed limits, are in effect when posted even if there isn't obvious construction taking place.

Not following traffic regulations can also lighten your wallet. For example, driving up to 20 miles over the speed limit could cost \$318 or more in fines and court costs.

"Highway work can occur at any time of the night or day, and conditions such as edge drops or equipment near the open lanes are a possibility in most work zones," said KDOT Work Zones Engineer Kristi Ericksen. "Having safe and efficient work zones requires effort from contractors, DOT staff and the driving public. Drivers do their part by intentionally following traffic regulations at all times, especially work zone speeds, even when the reasons aren't clear."

Last year in Kansas, four people were killed and 480 people injured in work zone crashes. Driver-related circumstances were a factor in 72 percent in these crashes including following too closely, inattention, too fast for conditions, right of way violation and improper lane change.

"National research shows that more than 80 percent of work zone fatalities are motorists and their passengers, rather than highway workers," Ericksen said. "It is important for drivers to do their part to improve safety in work zones."

When driving in work zones, KDOT reminds motorists to:

- ♦ Follow traffic control

- ♦Stay alert and calm
- ♦Watch for highway workers
- ♦Expect delays – leave early or choose alternate routes
- ♦Allow ample space between you and the car in front of you
- ♦Change lanes when directed to do so.

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