

National Work Zone Awareness

The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry reminds workers, employers, and the public about the hazards present in roadway and construction work zones.

According to **National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)**, hundreds of workers are killed every year in work zones, and thousands more are injured.

Many of these incidents involve:

- Workers struck by vehicles
- Equipment backing incidents
- Poor traffic control
- Workers exposed to moving traffic

Work zones combine several high-risk hazards:

- Moving traffic
- Heavy equipment
- Limited escape routes
- Worker distraction
- Night or low visibility work

These factors make work zones **one of the most dangerous environments** in construction.

VOSH frequently cites:

- Lack of traffic control plans
- Inadequate worker visibility
- Improper use of flaggers
- Workers being exposed to struck-by hazards

Key VOSH Expectations in Work Zones

Employers should implement protective measures to help keep workers safe, including:

1. **High Visibility Apparel:** Workers near traffic should wear high-visibility or reflective clothing.
2. **Traffic Control Plans:** Use signs, cone, barrels, and lane closures to separate workers from traffic.
3. **Trained Flaggers:** Ensure flaggers are properly trained and remain alert.
4. **Equipment Awareness:** Use backup alarms, spotters, and maintain clear communication around equipment.

Workers should **never walk behind equipment without making eye contact with the operator.**



Worker Responsibilities

Safety in work zones depends on **every worker on site.**

Workers should:

- Wear required high-visibility PPE
- Stay inside designated work areas
- Remain aware of traffic and equipment
- Avoid distractions such as phones
- Report unsafe traffic conditions immediately

Remember: Drivers are unpredictable. Assume they do not see you.

Work zones exist to **build, repair, and improve our infrastructure**, but they should never cost someone their life.

Key Takeaways:

- Slow down around work zones
- Stay visible
- Stay alert
- Look out for each other

