

Work Zone Safety Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is a work zone?

A: A designated area on a street or highway where construction is taking place.



Q: How should you react in a work zone?

A: Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings. Construction activity very close to the road involving workers and equipment can be very distracting. Be prepared to take action quickly. Expect the unexpected. If you are merging into another lane, try not to wait until the last minute. If a flagger stops you, be patient and realize the inconvenience is temporary. Allow ample space between your vehicle and the car in front of you. Avoid passing in the work zone. Be patient. Turn on your headlights.

Q: Why is "tailgating" extremely dangerous in a work zone?

A: Most rear-end crashes occur when cars follow too closely. They do not have enough room to stop. You need at least 2.5 seconds to react and one second for every 10 MPH you are traveling. If you are traveling at 55 MPH in a work zone, you need at least eight seconds to stop.

Q: Why is speeding dangerous in a work zone?

A: Speed is the number one contributing factor in work zone crashes. The speed limit is often lowered because of potentially hazardous conditions in the work zone. The posted speed limit will let you know what speed you should drive.

Q: What is the penalty for speeding in a work zone?

A: Speeding in designated work zones in North Carolina can result in a significant penalty of \$250 plus court costs.

Q: Why should you slow down when you don't see anyone working?

A: Physical hazards-such as traffic shifts or lane reductions-may be present. Obey the posted speed limit.

Q: What if you cause a fatal or serious injury in a work zone?

A: In North Carolina, if you injure someone in a crash (including crashes in work zones), you are responsible for a person's injuries and any traffic violations that are issued as a result of your involvement in the crash.

If there is a fatality as a result of the crash (including crashes in work zones), you could be charged with vehicular manslaughter. The District Attorney reviews each case based on the circumstances and makes the decisions whether to bring charges against the driver.

