Traffic Control Safety Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

When road workers build, maintain, repair, or conduct work on public streets or highways, they must be protected from traffic or haulage hazards. A variety of traffic control measures such as signs, lights, and other devices, along with continuous patrol, detours, and barricades can be used as traffic control measures.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

TRAFFIC CONTROL DANGERS/RISKS

Workers in traffic control work zones are exposed to injury from construction vehicles motorized equipment when:

- operating in and around the active work zone(s).
- operating in traffic control or secondary areas that support the work zone.
- entering and leaving the work zone.

Workers in the roadway are at risk of injury from a variety of general traffic vehicles entering the work zone, such as:

- drunk drivers.
- sleepy or impaired drivers.
- impatient, reckless drivers.
- drivers using cell phones.
- law enforcement and emergency vehicles.
- disabled vehicles pulling in and parking.
- drivers looking for directions.

SPECIFIC RISKS/DANGERS

A. Cell Phones. Surveys have found that 40% of drivers operating their vehicles in construction zones were using their phones which

resulted in traffic accidents.

B. Workers on foot. Flaggers and other workers-on-foot (refers to any pedestrian worker on the ground in the work zone) are exposed to several risks, including being hit if they are not visible.

C. Equipment Operator. Workers who operate construction vehicles or motorized equipment have an increased risk of injury due to rollovers, collisions, and being caught between or struck by operating equipment.

D. Hazard / Problems at Night. Visibility is greatly reduced at night and risk of getting injured or even killed increases in the dark. Drivers are more tired, sleepy, and less attentive.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

TRAFFIC CONTROL PLAN

It enables motorists to move safety through and around roadway zones for the protection of the public and workers. It makes use of:

- traffic control devices, standard signage, buffer, and transition zones.

It is the section of the highway where the work activity takes place. It is comprised of:

- work space.
- the traffic spaces.
- buffer space.

The “work space” is the portion of the road closed and set aside for equipment, workers, and materials. Work spaces are usually separated from the traffic space with channeling devices or temporary barriers and signs. This protects both vehicles and pedestrians.

Important components of a Temporary Traffic Control Plan are:

- Restrict personnel access points into work areas and

define/designate “no backing zones” and “pedestrian-free zones.”
- Design into the Temporary Traffic Control Plan flow paths for equipment and vehicle traffic to minimize backing maneuvers where possible. There should also be buffer spaces to protect pedestrian workers from straying traffic vehicles and/or work zone equipment.
- Establish procedures for entering and exiting the work zone.
- Train all employees on the Temporary Traffic Control Plan and its precautionary measures.

Protective measures within the Traffic Control Plan for workers.

- Be alert for construction vehicles, equipment, and general traffic.
- Check surroundings often for hazards.
- Know the plan for traffic flow.
- Keep a safe distance from traffic.
- Communicate with co-workers, with changes in procedures, locations, or traffic flow pattern.
- Stay behind the protective barriers.
- If you do not have a reason for being there, do not linger or cross into areas around moving equipment.
- Use extra precautions and additional safety apparel at night and during poor weather conditions.

WHAT WORKERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A WORK ZONE

- Clearly identify the work zone with signage as required in your jurisdiction.
- Design the work zone in such a way workers will be visible to all drivers (e.g., vehicles passing through, work vehicles, etc.). Remember that the driver’s sight lines will vary from location to location depending on the curve of the road, hills/valleys, or objects/buildings beside the road.
- Use barriers, barricades, markers, cones, etc. to guide traffic and to protect workers.
- Drivers must be given clear guidance on how to proceed through the work zone.
- Cover the permanent traffic signs and markings if temporary

markings and signs are used.

- Ensure that any signs, devices, or barriers are visible in all varying conditions of light and weather.
- Make sure that the work zone is indicated in advance so that the incoming traffic has time to adjust their speed and plan for a change of lane.
- If necessary, ask the road authority to reduce the speed limit in the work zone.

FINAL WORD

Motorists, employers, workers and general public must appreciate that work zones on public roads and highways are fraught with danger. Vigilance and due care must always be exercised at all times.