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## **69Express drivers reminded to focus on safety during National Work Zone Awareness Week**

National Work Zone Awareness Week, April 17-21, is a concentrated effort to remind both motorists and workers to refocus on vigilance and safety in roadway work zones. In 2022, an average of 3.1 work zone crashes occurred every day in Kansas.

With construction having recently begun on the 69Express project – reconstruction of U.S. 69 between 103rd and 151st Streets in Overland Park – 69Express project partners, including the Kansas Department of Transportation, as well as local public works groups and other transportation industry organizations, ask motorists to be especially watchful in work zones they may not be familiar with yet.

To emphasize National Work Zone Awareness Week, Wednesday, April 19, is designated as Go Orange Day in Kansas.

Orange is the primary safety color in work zones, and everyone is encouraged to wear orange to show highway workers and others who work along the state's roadways how much their efforts are appreciated.

The theme of this year's National Work Zone Awareness Week, "You play a role in work zone safety. Work with us," is a reminder that collaboration between motorists and workers is necessary to improve safety for everyone because more than 85% of the time, drivers and passengers are those injured in work zone crashes. In 2022 in Kansas, 13 people died in work zone crashes and 341 people were injured.

Inattention is the top contributing circumstance of work zone crashes. And not paying attention to posted speed limits and other traffic laws while in work zones can make drivers pay in other ways. Fines are double in all Kansas work zones, whether they are major construction projects or short-term maintenance projects.



In addition, the Kansas Move Over Law requires drivers on four-lane highways – as U.S. 69 is – to switch to the lane furthest from any stationary vehicle displaying flashing lights, if it is safe to do so. Citations for failure to comply carry a \$195 fine plus court costs.

KDOT offers these tips to help keep motorists and workers safe in work zones:

- Expect delays. Plan accordingly by reviewing daily construction and closure updates on the [69Express project website](#). Follow traffic control and be patient. For road condition details, including work zones, in the KC metro, check KC Scout at <http://www.kcscout.com/> and for statewide details, check KanDrive at <https://www.kandrive.org/>. Both traffic information platforms are available for download as mobile apps in the Apple App Store and Google Play.
- Pay attention and be alert.
- Watch for workers.
- Allow plenty of space between vehicles.
- Change lanes when and where directed.

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