

August 4, 2016

Motorists urged to use caution in work zones and plan ahead

The North Dakota Department of Transportation's 2016 construction season is mid-way through with about 188 projects taking place across the state. Some of these projects may affect travel time and motorists are asked to plan ahead by looking at the travel map on the NDDOT website (dot.nd.gov/travel-info-v2/), using the NDRoads phone app or by calling 511 to find out about project locations as well as speed limits, vehicle width and length restrictions in some areas.

Road construction is essential as the transportation system needs to be maintained and enhanced to ensure safety for the traveling public. The NDDOT asks motorists to allow extra time to get to their destination and use caution as well as courtesy while driving through the work zones. Trying to arrive at a destination a minute or two sooner is not worth the risk. In a 10-mile work zone, it only takes 75 seconds longer to reduce your speed by 10 mph.

"We know that delays occur during road construction season and want to thank everyone for their patience, but safety is important and a top priority on our highways," says Grant Levi, NDDOT Director. "When motorists travel through a work zone, there is no room for error. Last year 155 crashes occurred in work zones resulting in one fatality as compared to 242 crashes and two fatalities in work zones in 2014. Drivers need to pay attention and minimize distractions."

As a reminder, if your travels lead you through a work zone, check the Travel Map for specific information about the following:

- You may experience traffic delays, and travel through a detour.
- Speeds are reduced through work areas.
- The number of driving lanes are often decreased.
- Width restrictions may be in place, if you are wider than the limit, you may need to adjust the route of your travels.
- Occasionally, length restrictions may be in place, such as in Carrington, where a new roundabout is being constructed.
- Flagger and pilot cars may be present, so be prepared to slow down and stop for them.
- At times workers will be present and could be working very close to the path of travel, please be courteous and slow down.
- Sometimes, traffic may be moved onto temporary or gravel surfaces. Caution should be used when transitioning from one surface to another.

Here are some basic tips to follow when traveling through work zones:

- Don't speed. Obey posted speed limits at all times, even when workers aren't present.
- Minimize distractions.
- Be patient. Work zones aren't present to inconvenience drivers, they're an important part in maintaining and rebuilding our state's infrastructure.
- Stay alert. Dedicate your full attention to the roadway.