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Lives depend on work zone safety

Inattention was the main cause of nearly 80 percent of all work zone crashes in Kansas last year.

“It’s painfully evident that many of the motorists who drive through our work zones are oblivious to the risks their driving poses to those who are working just an arms-length away,” said Kansas Department of Transportation Secretary Deb Miller. “And if those drivers aren’t thinking about the workers, they certainly aren’t thinking about all the people who depend on those workers to come home safe and sound at the end of the day.”

Secretary Miller was joined today at a statewide work zone safety event by Kansas Highway Patrol Superintendent Ernest Garcia, Dustrol Vice President Brian Hansen and Shirley McDonald, whose son, KDOT employee Scotty McDonald, was killed in a 2005 work zone crash. The event was conducted at KDOT’s Oakland office in Topeka.

The event is part of National Work Zone Awareness Week, April 4-8, which is an effort to raise awareness of the hazards and dangers highway workers face every day.

And the danger isn’t just an issue for highway workers

Seven people were killed and more than 500 people were injured in work zone crashes in Kansas last year. All the fatalities and most of the injured people were motorists.

“Following traffic control and paying attention can help motorists travel through work zones safely and efficiently,” said Ernest Garcia, Superintendent of the Kansas Highway Patrol. “Work zone safety is a high priority for the KHP.”

When traveling through a work zone, motorists should:

- ◆ Follow traffic control
- ◆ Stay alert
- ◆ Watch for workers
- ◆ Expect delays
- ◆ Allow ample space between you and the car in front of you
- ◆ Change lanes when directed to do so

For more information on work zone safety both in Kansas and nationwide, go to KDOT’s website at www.ksdot.org.

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700 SW Harrison St., 2nd Fl West, Topeka, KS 66603-3754 or phone 785-296-3585 (Voice)/Hearing Impaired – 711.