



NORTH TEXAS TOLLWAY AUTHORITY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 9, 2010

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NTTA Monthly Safe-T Buzz Tip: Stay Safe in Construction Zones

Plano, TX – Each month, the North Texas Tollway Authority shares roadway safety information and tips as part of its Safe-T Buzz campaign, a year-round program designed to promote roadway safety and mobility.

In this month's tip, NTTA Safety Manager Fred Hilliard provides an overview of work zone safety now that the NTTA has begun converting the Dallas North Tollway to [cashless tolling](#).

"Work zones, whether for construction or roadway maintenance, require extra attention and extreme caution for drivers," said Hilliard. "Drivers should pay special attention to workers, equipment and traffic control devices that may be present."

Hilliard adds that roadway workers face immediate danger during their entire work shift, but drivers going through work zones also face increased risk.

According to the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), more than 700 people were killed in work zone crashes across the United States in 2008 (the most recent year for which data is available), and approximately 90 percent of the people killed in those crashes were drivers and their passengers.

As part of the NTTA's continued focus on safety, the Authority uses a portable barrier system designed to protect maintenance workers and drivers in temporary work zones. The system, which incorporates a smooth steel beam with an impact cushion on the end facing oncoming traffic, offers positive protection along the full length of the work zone.

But even with safety measures in place, Hilliard says when approaching a work zone, drivers should slow down and pay extra attention to signs, speed limits and message boards alerting them to changing routes or conditions. Drivers should also be alert to other drivers who may not be paying attention.

When traveling through work zones, Hilliard suggests following these tips provided by ARTBA and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation:

- Eliminate distractions: Drinking, eating, using a cell phone or adjusting radio settings all take attention away from the road long enough for serious mistakes to occur.
- Expect the unexpected: Speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be changed, and people may be working on or near the road.
- Slow down and obey work zone speed limits: A car traveling at 60 mph travels 88 feet per second. The faster you are driving, the longer it takes to stop.
- Read caution signs: Don't assume that the same traffic switches or road conditions are in effect as the last time you traveled through that work zone. Construction schedules call for frequent changes.
- Give yourself room: Rear-end collisions are the most common type of accident in work zones.
- Plan ahead: Leave early or map out an alternate route so you don't feel pressured to speed.
- Be patient: If you don't see workers, that doesn't mean they aren't there.

Hilliard says it is also important to remember that Texas enforces increased penalties for drivers who ignore posted speed limits in work zones where workers are present. A traffic ticket will cost more when workers are in the area.

Safety is no accident. Follow these safety tips and report unsafe drivers or conditions to either 9-1-1 or the NTTA Command Center at 972-444-HELP (4357).

About the NTTA

The North Texas Tollway Authority, a political subdivision of the state of Texas, is authorized to acquire, construct, maintain, repair and operate turnpike projects in the north Texas region. The nine-member governing board is comprised of Chairman Paul N. Wageman; Vice Chairman Victor Vandergriff; and Directors Kenneth Barr, Bob Day, David Denison, Bill Moore, Michael Nowels, Bob Shepard and Alan E. Sims.

The NTTA serves Collin, Dallas, Denton and Tarrant counties and is responsible for the NTTA System, consisting of the Dallas North Tollway, President George Bush Turnpike, Sam Rayburn Tollway, Addison Airport Toll Tunnel, Lewisville Lake Toll Bridge and the Mountain Creek Lake Bridge. The NTTA is able to raise capital for construction projects through the issuance of turnpike revenue bonds. NTTA toll projects are not a part of the state highway system and receive no direct tax funding. Tolls are collected to repay debt and to operate and maintain the roadways.

Visit the NTTA Web site at www.ntta.org or call 214-461-2000 for additional information about the NTTA. For customer service, please call 972-818-NTTA (6882).

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