

## **NOTICE OF PROPOSED GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

Connector May newsletter

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. s. 227.112, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is hereby seeking comment on Connector May newsletter [Wis. Stat. Ch. 343, Wis. Stat. Ch. 346], a proposed guidance document.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION**

Comments may be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for 21 days by:

1. Department's website: <https://appengine.egov.com/apps/wi/dot/guidance-docs?guidDocId=OPA19>

2. Mailing written comments to:  
Office of Public Affairs  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
PO Box 7910  
Madison, WI 53707-7910

### **WEBSITE LOCATION OF FINAL GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

The final version of this guidance document will be posted at [wisconsindot.gov](http://wisconsindot.gov) to allow for ongoing comment.

### **AGENCY CONTACT**

DOTOPAGuidanceDocs@DOT.WI.GOV



## State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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# Connector newsletter - May 2017

[Connector newsletters](#)

[Connect with us](#)

[Law of the month](#)

[Media contacts](#)

[Events](#)

## The Connector

- Wisconsin State Patrol joins #moveover17 Memorial Day weekend safety campaign
- Highway construction put on hold for Memorial Day weekend
- Donald Driver in Milwaukee for Click it or Ticket campaign launch
- Roadway safety is 2-way street during planting, harvest seasons
- 3 new specialty license plates introduced
- State Patrol partners with Winnebago Sheriff to combat rise in work zone crashes
- May is National Motorcycle Awareness Month
- Steer It Clear It is May law of month
- Get 'ready to rumble' for work zone safety
- Dynamic message signs play public safety role in Silver Alert
- Real estate system upgrades gain national recognition

### Wisconsin State Patrol joins #moveover17 Memorial Day weekend safety

## campaign

Joe Starr, Wisconsin DOT — Published May 24

Wisconsin State Patrol is joining fellow law enforcement and other first responders nationwide this Friday for #moveover17, a Memorial Day weekend social media safety campaign reminding drivers to move over when passing emergency vehicles parked on roadsides.

Memorial Day weekend is a traditionally travel-heavy holiday, so emergency agencies will use the #moveover17 hashtag with their tweets and other social media exchanges all day Friday, as the travel rush begins, stressing the importance of driving safely and moving over for emergency and maintenance vehicles working at the side of the road.

### Wisconsin is making it personal

Wisconsin State Patrol is taking a personal approach to #moveover17, [tweeting short bios](#) that share a personal side of some of the troopers and inspectors who patrol Wisconsin's highways.



"Every State Patrol officer has family members and friends who care, love and worry about them," said Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Transportation Safety Director Dave Pabst. "They are someone's sons, daughters and parents, and at the end of the day they are like everyone else – they want to go home and be with the ones they love." The intent of the bios is to make personal connections between the public and first responders.

"We want drivers to have that intimate understanding of who these officers are on a personal level like they do with their neighbors, friends or family members, so when they are out traveling this weekend or at any other time they will have that connection in their mind, and be extra cautious and move over."

Wisconsin law requires that drivers shift lanes or slow down in order to provide a "safety zone" for a squad car, ambulance, fire truck, tow truck, utility vehicle or highway maintenance vehicles stopped on the roadside with warning lights flashing. AAA of Wisconsin expects some 700,000 state residents will travel 50 miles or more on state roadways over the holiday weekend.

[Return to top](#)

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## Highway construction work put on hold for Memorial Day weekend

Motorists reminded to slow down, be patient, especially in work zones

Rob Miller, Wisconsin DOT — Published May 24

To ease travel congestion this Memorial Day weekend, Wisconsin DOT is asking contractors to temporarily halt construction work on many highway improvement projects statewide.

While workers will open as many highway lanes as possible, motorists should still allow extra travel time and expect slower traffic in work zones and along major highway corridors.

Construction in most highway work zones will stop by noon on Friday and will not resume until 6 a.m. next Tuesday. Peak travel times



for the Memorial Day weekend are expected to occur between noon and 8 p.m. on both Friday and Monday. AAA of Wisconsin expects some 700,000 state residents will

travel 50 miles or more on state roadways over the holiday weekend.

"We'll be pulling back construction barrels and opening as many lanes as possible, but we're asking motorists to plan ahead, avoid peak travel periods, if possible, and expect traffic to slow down or even stop, especially in work zones," said Wayne Chase, Wisconsin DOT's chief construction oversight engineer. "We need drivers to be patient and focused on what's ahead of them to prevent rear-end crashes that are common in work zones."

### Handheld mobile device prohibited in work zones

State law prohibits drivers from using a handheld mobile device in Wisconsin work zones, except for emergencies. Fines start at \$40. Transportation safety officials note that higher traffic volumes and speeds often generate more traffic-related deaths and injuries. During last year's Memorial Day weekend in Wisconsin, 10 people lost their lives in traffic-related crashes.

"We want everyone to reach their destinations safely, but that requires all motorists to do their part by buckling up, being alert and responsible behind the wheel," said David Pabst, director of WisDOT's Bureau of Transportation Safety. "To help prevent traffic deaths and injuries, law enforcement agencies throughout Wisconsin are watching for unbuckled drivers and passengers as part of the [Click It or Ticket mobilization](#) that continues through June 4."

Throughout the spring and summer travel periods, the Wisconsin State Patrol will use aircraft as part of traffic safety enforcement efforts. The dates, times and locations of many of the aerial enforcement missions are announced in advance [on Twitter](#).

### Significant road construction projects

**Zoo Interchange project in Milwaukee County** - work continues with a new traffic pattern in place. Closures include the system ramp from I-94 westbound to I-41/894 southbound. Access to I-94 westbound is restricted at 84th Street. The ramp remains open for traffic going to I-41 northbound. Various other on and off ramps remain under construction with detours posted to get motorists around the closures.

**I-41 over the Kohlsville River in Washington County** has a unique traffic pattern in place. To maximize traffic flow in the area, both lanes of I-41 southbound are open to traffic with one lane crossing over to the northbound roadway and the other remaining on the southbound roadway. Those looking to access the County D exit ramp from I-41 southbound should stay in the right lane. Both northbound lanes are open to traffic. This traffic pattern will remain in place until late June.

**WIS 142 (Bushnell Road) near the city of Burlington** will have a roadway closure to through traffic between WIS 11/36/83 and downtown Burlington that may impact travel for Chocolate Fest over the holiday weekend. Motorists are encouraged to use the signed detour route along Durand Avenue/State Street and WIS 11/36/83 to get around the closure.

**WIS 175 in Washington County** - full closure from just north of County Q to just south of County F and from just north of WIS 167 (Holy Hill Road) to WIS 60. Detour involves use of I-41, accessing at WIS 60 or County Y (Lannon Road).

**US 45 in Kenosha County** - full closure from the IL/WI state line to north of County C. Detour involves use of I-41, accessing at WIS 50 or IL 173.

**I-39/90/94 north of Madison** - traffic reduced to two lanes in each direction and lane shifts at WIS 19 (Exit 131).

**I-39/90 in Dane and Rock counties** - be alert for lane shifts and crossovers. Reduced speed limit on I-39/90 northbound near Edgerton and Newville. Ramps to/from I-39/90 northbound at US 51 interchange (Exit 156) are closed. Alternate routes are required.

**US 14 northbound ramp to westbound US 12/18 (Madison Beltline)** closed May 26 - 27. Alternate routes are required.

**Verona Road (US 18/151)** in Dane County.

**I-43 in Brown County** is reduced to a single lane in each direction between Denmark (WIS 96) and the WIS 172/I-43 ramps in Green Bay. Also, I-43 in southern Manitowoc County is reduced to a single lane in each direction. As these lane reductions may result in traffic back-ups and/or slow travel, motorists may wish to consider using I-41 through Fond du Lac, Winnebago, Outagamie and Brown counties as an alternate north/south route.

**I-41 near US 10 in Winnebago County** - northbound and southbound lanes of I-41 have a 55 mph speed reduction and lane shifts throughout the WIS 441 Tri-Project work zone. Eastbound and westbound US 10 also have a 55 mph speed reduction through the work zone.

**WIS 128 (Pierce/St Croix counties)** - detour of WIS 128 between WIS 72 and WIS 29 to replace culverts. Detour route would include WIS 72 to Pierce County G to Pierce County CC to WIS 29.

**US 12 (Clairemont Ave) in Eau Claire** - motorists can expect single lane closures.

**WIS 22 in Clintonville (Waupaca County)** is closed between 13th Street and WIS 156. Through traffic is detoured via 7th St., N. Lyon St., E. 12th St., SSGT Warren Hansen Drive, and WIS 156.

**US 51 in Marathon County** - the left shoulder on northbound US 51 will be closed at the County WW interchange and the southbound climbing lane north of Brokaw will be closed to traffic. US 51 northbound and southbound will be open to two lanes of traffic in each direction.

**WIS 54 between Dexterville and Port Edwards (Wood County)** is closed and detoured via WIS 80, WIS 173 and WIS 73.

For up-to-the-minute information on work zones and incidents that may affect highway travel, motorists can access the state's 511 travel information system by downloading the free 511 Wisconsin mobile app or following [@511WI on Twitter](#). Users can also access the system by dialing 511 on a phone or visiting [511 Wisconsin](#).

[Return to top](#)

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## Donald Driver in Milwaukee for Click it or Ticket mobilization launch

Packers great helps Wisconsin law enforcement stress need to buckle-up every trip

Rob Miller, Wisconsin DOT — Updated May 23



Donald Driver, Green Bay Packers all-time leading receiver and Zero in Wisconsin spokesperson for safety belt use, joined law enforcement agencies

throughout Wisconsin to kick off this year's Click it or Ticket law enforcement mobilization at a news conference in Milwaukee.

"I know sometimes we feel that we don't want to wear them because we're only going, what, right down the street," said Driver, speaking during the event at Milwaukee's Fire Station No. 2. "But in a split second...a split second, your life can be taken. Just in seconds."

Wisconsin law enforcement agencies statewide joined the annual Click It or Ticket initiative, which runs through June 4. As part of Click It or Ticket, state and local law enforcement officers will patrol in greater numbers for longer hours looking for unbuckled motorists.

"This is not about writing citations - it's about saving lives by encouraging all drivers and passengers to buckle-up every day, every trip, every seat," said David Pabst, director of Wisconsin DOT's Bureau of Transportation Safety. Last year in Wisconsin, there were more than 68,500 convictions for failure to fasten a safety belt, and nearly half of the drivers and passengers killed in traffic crashes were not wearing safety belts. In 2009, when the first ad featuring Donald Driver aired, Wisconsin's overall safety belt use rate was less than 74 percent, said Wisconsin State Patrol Major Tony Burrell.

"Thanks to our collective public education and law enforcement efforts, Wisconsin's safety belt use rate is now at an all-time high - over 88 percent," said Burrell, who further emphasized that there is still work to be done as Wisconsin trails the 90 percent national safety belt use rate average.

"We're making progress. And that's a credit to our many partners including Donald Driver, law enforcement and emergency responders across the state," said Burrell. "But ultimately, safety on our roadways requires the cooperation of all motor vehicle drivers and passengers, and it starts with the simple 'click' of a safety belt."

Along with enhanced law enforcement efforts during Click It or Ticket, Wisconsin DOT is using federal funds to distribute TV, radio, Internet and other messages that can be viewed on the [Zero in Wisconsin website](#). Wisconsin DOT unveiled a new [TV spot entitled "Bad Date,"](#) highlighting how unbuckled motorists risk serious injuries or death not only to themselves but fellow vehicle occupants when thrown about violently in a crash.

Electronic message signs along major highways are displaying reminders to drivers during Click it or Ticket to be safe and buckle-up.

"Over the last eight years, our collective efforts have boosted seat belt use by nearly 15 percent in Wisconsin," Pabst said. "It's safe to say there are many people alive today simply because they were wearing a safety belt. Although we're making progress and saving lives, we will continue to push towards our goal of zero deaths on Wisconsin roads."



Driver shows off an honorary fire chief helmet presented to him prior to his speech to help launch the annual Click it or Ticket campaign at Milwaukee Fire Station No. 2.

[Return to top](#)

## Roadway safety is 2-way street during planting, harvest seasons

### Farmers, public alike need to be extra vigilant while driving rural roads

David Hunt, Wisconsin DOT — Published May 17

Whether it be spring planting or fall harvest, motorists on Wisconsin's rural roads need to heighten awareness as more agricultural equipment will be out traveling to and from farm fields during these times.



"The road to every grocery store and farmer's market starts in Wisconsin's countryside," said

Wisconsin DOT Secretary Dave Ross. "It's important that we give our farmers the room they need to get the job done. That means eliminating distractions, moving over when possible and slowing down." As agricultural equipment is heavy and often slow-moving, there are special considerations that both the farming community and the traveling public should keep in mind to prevent crashes and damage to state infrastructure.

Patience is an important habit to practice whenever driving, but it is especially important during planting season. Tractors and other large farm equipment often move slower than posted speed limits and their nontraditional roadway entrance and exit points to and from adjacent farmland can come unexpectedly. This and the fact that some farming vehicles are wider than the lanes they travel in further stresses the need for drivers to give extra attention and patience. The need for heightened awareness and patience applies to everyone, including farmers, says Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Ben Brancel

"Farmers and the public alike need to share the roadway," says Brancel. "Machinery operators have to be aware of the speed of traffic and traffic must slow down for farm vehicles that tend to be slow moving." Farm machinery should also be marked with proper emblems that enhance their visibility and help alert oncoming traffic.

**Drivers: watch out for farm vehicles** – Sixteen people have been killed and 517 injured within the past five years in crashes involving agricultural equipment in Wisconsin. Drivers should slow down immediately whenever they see a fluorescent orange slow-moving vehicle emblem on the rear of a tractor or other piece of equipment. Stay alert, focused and patient when passing a slow moving agricultural vehicle in an area where passing is legal. Importantly, remember that [a recent change in Wisconsin law](#) makes it illegal for motorists to pass slow moving agricultural equipment in a no passing zone.

**Farmers: know the lighting and marking requirements** – Lighting and marking requirements draw attention to the size, shape and speed of agricultural vehicles, and alert drivers that caution is required. There are specific requirements for different types of equipment. Wisconsin DOT has [information and a short explanatory video](#) published on the web.

**Farmers: know local weight restrictions** – Agricultural equipment axle weights are typically heavy and can have a significant impact on our roads and bridges. Tractors and other implements of husbandry are allowed to operate on Wisconsin roadways, provided the vehicles are within weight limits. Agricultural weight limits are 23,000 pounds per axle or 92,000 pounds gross vehicle weight, dependent on number of axles and axle spacing, and subject to seasonal or special postings. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection [publishes a map](#)

[with local information](#) about weight limits and, when applicable, local permitting needs.

[Return to top](#)

---

### 3 new specialty license plates introduced

Terry Walsh, Wisconsin DOT — Published May 17

National Nurses Week was the perfect time to unveil three new specialty license plates now available through the Wisconsin DOT's [Division of Motor Vehicles](#) (DMV).

Department Secretary Dave Ross joined Wisconsin nursing leaders at a ceremony introducing the "Nurses Change Lives" specialty license plate. The "Help Cure Childhood Cancer" and "Scouting Alumni" were also introduced this month, bringing the number of Wisconsin specialty plates to 47.



Specialty plates are available for a \$15 issuance fee for non-personalized plates and an additional \$25 tax-deductible donation, which is transferred to the sponsoring organization. Plate holders pay the annual \$25 donation and the regular registration fee at each annual renewal.

Secretary Dave Ross joined Wisconsin nursing leaders to unveil the "Nurses Change Lives" specialty license plate.

Nurses Change Lives license plate donations go to the [Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Executives, Inc.](#), with the Help Cure Childhood Cancer and Scouting Alumni plate donations going to [MACC Fund](#) (Midwest Athletes Against Childhood Cancer, Inc.) and local Wisconsin councils of the [Boy Scouts of America National Foundation](#), respectively.

#### Application process

Requests for these three new plates were submitted before the Authorized Special Group license plate process, which began in March 2016 with Act 227. Under the new process, sponsoring groups pay a \$15,500 fee for development costs and are required to collect signatures from 500 Wisconsin residents who intend to purchase the special plates. A required 30-day public comment period invites feedback on each of the proposed specialty plates. Comments are passed to the Transportation Committee for review in both houses of the Wisconsin State Legislature for consideration and a final vote on each proposed plate.

[Return to top](#)

---

### State Patrol partners with Winnebago Sheriff to combat rise in work zone crashes

Joe Starr, Wisconsin DOT — Published May 16

A college student stopped for speeding and tailgating while driving through a WIS 441 work zone on her way to UW-Oshkosh explained to Wisconsin State Patrol Sgt. Tim McGrath that she was running late for class.

McGrath has heard similar explanations





numerous times during his 23 years with the State Patrol. His primary intent with traffic stops is not to issue citations - although he will if the stop warrants - but to stress to drivers the importance of always abiding by speed limit and other traffic safety laws, especially when traveling through work zones.

State Patrol and the [Winnebago County Sheriff's Office](#) recently teamed up to target bad driving behaviors in the [WIS](#)

[441 Tri-county Expansion Project](#) work zone. The WIS 441 enforcement effort resulted in 54 traffic stops, 28 citations and 80 warnings. Five of the stops were for cell phone use or inattentive driving in a work zone with an additional five stops related to following too close. McGrath says that these and similar special enforcement efforts are announced in advance to the public as an educational measure to encourage voluntary compliance.

"We are hoping this enforcement detail leaves an impression on drivers, and positive driving behaviors will carry over into the busy construction season."

### **Work zone crashes on the rise**

Warmer weather brings higher traffic volumes. This coincides with an increase in roadwork projects and McGrath says they are seeing a spike in crashes along the WIS 441 work zone.

"Our construction crews are seeing a disturbing trend of drivers in the WIS 441 work zone not paying attention to the only thing they should be doing - driving. We are seeing more crashes now that construction has ramped up for the season. Bad driver behavior is directly responsible for the majority of crashes."

Reported work zone crashes in Winnebago County saw a more than 200 percent increase from 2014 to 2017, going from 76 to 239. Statewide, there have been more than 2,000 work zone crashes in each of the last three years, including more than 2,800 in 2016 - an average of more than seven each day. In 2016, work zone crashes caused nine fatalities and 1,110 injuries in Wisconsin.

"We want motorists to be conscious of their behavior while driving their vehicles," says McGrath. "A lot can happen - fast - even at a reduced speed in a work zone, so it's very important to eliminate distractions, slow down and avoid tailgating."

### **Cell phone use illegal in work zones**

Winnebago County Sheriff's Office Lieutenant Lori Seiler says drivers using cell phones continue to be a primary crash contributor. A new law in Wisconsin makes it illegal to talk on a handheld mobile device while driving in a work zone. She adds that following the new law is simple: See orange cones - put down the phones. If you are observed talking or texting on a hand-held device in a work zone, you will be ticketed and receive a fine.

"This is where I live. This is where my friends and family work, and this is where law-abiding motorists I'm tasked with protecting travel every day," says Seiler. "Unfortunately, bad driving behaviors are putting their lives at risk. Distracted or aggressive driving is deadly, prevalent, expensive and entirely preventable."

The WIS 441 Tri-County Project contracts with the Wisconsin State Patrol to provide extra law enforcement presence in the work zone. Drivers ticketed in the work zone will see their fine double.

[Return to top](#)

## Steer it, Clear it is May law of the month

Wisconsin DOT — Published May 16

You're driving on the highway, it's rush hour and you see brake lights in front of you. You apply the brakes to meet pace with the slowing traffic, but as you do you are jolted when a car hits you from behind. What now?

"Any traffic crash—even a minor fender-bender—can be traumatic for everyone involved," says Wisconsin State Patrol Capt. David Fish. "It's important that motorists involved in a crash maintain composure and take steps for their own safety and the safety of others on the road."

The first step, even if it's a minor crash, says Fish is to check for injuries and call 911, if medical assistance is needed.



"If no one is injured, motorists need to follow the steps contained in the 'Steer It, Clear It Law.'"

The Steer It, Clear It Law requires motorists involved in crashes to move their vehicles to a safe location away from traffic if no one is injured and it can be driven. The vehicles should be moved to a location, such as a highway shoulder, a side road, an on or off ramp, a parking lot or a crash investigation site, where they will obstruct traffic as little as possible. Once the vehicle is at a safe location, drivers can contact law enforcement and exchange information. The Steer it, Clear It Law also grants immunity from civil damages to any person who removes a crashed vehicle from traffic as well as debris in the roadway or other obstruction.

"Vehicles involved in crashes that are left in the roadway contribute to traffic back-ups that may cause additional crashes," says Fish. "Moving the vehicles away from traffic also helps law enforcement officers and other responders to quickly remove disabled vehicles and clear the crash scene so that normal traffic can resume."

The State Patrol offers the following additional advice for motorists involved in a crash:

- If your vehicle is disabled, do not risk injury by trying to push it out of traffic by yourself.
- If your vehicle cannot be moved, stay inside with your seat belt fastened for protection until responders arrive.
- To help prevent additional crashes, warn oncoming traffic of the crash by turning on your hazard lights or raising the hood of the vehicle.

[Return to top](#)

---

## May is National Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month

Motorists asked to be alert; motorcyclists must be properly licensed

Sarah Buzzell, Wisconsin DOT — Published May 9

Do you look before changing lanes? Look again because you might be missing someone important.

May is National Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month - the perfect time to draw attention to the state's 550,000-plus licensed motorcyclists and their presence on Wisconsin roads. Motorcycles can be tough to spot and they often appear with little warning. Their narrow profiles are easily hidden from sight behind door and roof pillars or masked by backgrounds outside vehicles - like bushes, fences and bridges. Taking time to look twice for motorcyclists goes a long way toward reducing crash risks.



### Motorcyclists at higher risk

The [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website](#) stated that motorcyclist deaths occurred 27 times more frequently than fatalities in other vehicles, according to 2014 crash data. In Wisconsin last year, 82 motorcycle riders and passengers died in traffic crashes.

During National Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, Wisconsin DOT traffic safety officials are reminding motorcyclists, and all other motorists to share the road and be safe.

"We're reminding car and truck drivers to be alert for motorcycles, especially at intersections, when making turns and lane changes," said David Pabst, director of Wisconsin DOT's Bureau of Transportation Safety. "At the same time, we're urging motorcyclists to always wear protective equipment, get properly licensed and consider taking a motorcycle safety course appropriate for their skill level."

### Motorcycle operator license required in Wisconsin

As a group, the motorcycling community is aging. The average age of a motorcyclist involved in a fatal crash increased from 30 years old in 1992 to 48 in 2016.

"We see far too many people riding without a [motorcycle license](#), which is required in addition to their driver license," Pabst said. "It's a serious problem, and includes people who have not ridden a motorcycle for several years and start to ride again, often on a cycle that's larger and more powerful."

To reach out to riders and motorists statewide, Wisconsin DOT will hit the road again this year with its mobile training facility, called [THE REF \(Transportable High-End Rider Education Facility\)](#). THE REF promotes training for all riders as well as motorists' awareness of motorcycles on the road. Last year, THE REF made visits throughout the state to 50 events that covered 70 days.

[Return to top](#)

---

## Get 'ready to rumble' for work zone safety

### Temporary portable rumble strips required for many projects with flagging operations

[David Hunt](#), Wisconsin DOT — Published May 9

Last year, Wisconsin DOT piloted use of temporary portable rumble strips (TPRS) on 11 state highway projects where flaggers were used to stop and direct traffic through work zones.

This construction season, Wisconsin DOT is making TPRS a requirement for all projects that involve flagging operations where the flagger will be in the same spot for an extended period. The 2017 construction season will also see pilot use of TPRS in advance of lane closures on some higher-speed, multi-lane highways.



Drivers in St. Croix, Dunn, Eau Claire and Jackson counties will encounter TPRS on I-94 as workers install a High Tension Cable Barrier to improve safety. TPRS will also be used in advance of lane closures on I-43 in Sheboygan County. (Information on current and upcoming projects is available on the [511 Wisconsin Projects site](#).)

When motorists cross over the rumble strips, they hear a rumbling sound accompanied by a light shaking sensation. The vibratory effect is similar to when a driver hits a rumble strip while drifting out of a highway lane. It's a noticeable reminder that a work zone is ahead. When approaching a work zone, drivers should slow down and pay closer attention. At 55 mph, a vehicle covers the length of a football field in less than four seconds. Additionally, distracted driving has been a leading cause of work zone fatalities in Wisconsin.

Last year in Wisconsin, there were more than 2,800 work zone crashes that resulted in 1,110 injuries and nine fatalities. While highway workers are vulnerable, the majority of people injured or killed in work zone crashes are motorists.

[Return to top](#)

## Dynamic message signs play public safety role in Silver Alert success

Wisconsin DOT — Published May 4

The recent heroic efforts of Milwaukee County Transit System Operator Matt Kallas all started with a Silver Alert shared on one of Wisconsin DOT's dynamic message signs.



The story, [captured by WTMJ-TV](#), told how Kallas saw a Silver Alert for a 79-year-old Waukesha County man displayed on one of the state's many highway DMSs used to relay safety and traffic update messages to drivers. Kallas, who spotted the man driving on the highway, told WTMJ that he verified the plate number displayed on the DMS and called 911 before getting the man's attention and coaching him safely off the road.

Wisconsin's Silver Alert system is in place to help resolve these types of cases quickly by getting the word out to the traveling public.

Ever since the inception of Wisconsin Silver Alert in August



2014, Wisconsin DOT has worked with the [Wisconsin Department of Justice](#) to notify the public of missing persons older than age 60 with Alzheimer's Disease, other types of dementia or other permanent cognitive impairments. Wisconsin DOT uses the DMS along roadways to broadcast Silver Alert messages when it's believed the missing person is traveling in a motor vehicle.

WisDOT has broadcast more than 100 Silver Alert messages since August 2014.

Silver Alert messages are an important part of the critical safety benefits made possible through DMS.

In addition to Silver Alerts and AMBER Alerts (missing, endangered children), DMS are used to inform drivers of crashes, construction, closures, delays, special events, road hazards, inclement weather and other traffic-related concerns. The signs help to provide drivers information they need to make informed decisions about the road ahead and play an important role in roadway safety.

[Return to top](#)

---

## Real estate system upgrades gain national recognition

[David Hunt](#), Wisconsin DOT — Published May 4

The Federal Highway Administration honored Wisconsin DOT's Real Estate Automated Data System (READS) with the 2017 Excellence in Right-of-Way Innovation Award. The award underscores the success of system upgrades and essentially shows that Wisconsin DOT is creating best practices nationally.

"It's important that we continue to strive for system improvements for timely, quality work," said Drew Kottke, READS system administrator. "The more we can streamline in this area, the more opportunities we have to refine customer



focus and better manage our resources.”

Recent READS upgrades now allow the system to enable electronic signatures, bar code scanning as well as linking READS with the department’s financial system. These changes make the system easier to use by reducing the need for paper and improving data organization.

The real estate process is vital to ensure the success of many highway improvement projects. Real estate purchases are commonly needed to expand highway right of way and capacity. WisDOT also routinely sells parcels left over from improvement projects to business people and nearby landowners.

The FHWA’s announcement of the innovation award says, “[READS] supports staff assignments to specific projects and parcels by allowing staff to see their own workloads and information on approaching deadlines or past actions ... These features make real estate project management streamlined and efficient.”

[Return to top](#)

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---

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---

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---

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