



SUMMER ROAD CONSTRUCTION SAFETY

We all are responsible for driving, walking and biking safely through work zones. The engineers and planners have the responsibility to make sure the work zone is designed and operating properly -- with safety in mind. Drivers



and pedestrians have the responsibility to always be alert and obey the traffic laws. The police and the courts have the responsibility

to make sure that the traffic and work zone laws are enforced. Public safety agencies have the responsibility of responding to and securing crash locations and enforcing traffic laws. Local communities and county and state governments need to allocate funding for safe roads and increase public awareness about work zone safety. Everyone should take responsibility for work zone safety.

In 2007 there were 835 people killed and 41,475 people injured in work zone crashes. Compared to 2006, work zone fatalities decreased 17% and injuries increased 10%. Based on a National Safety Council survey in August 2008, 35 states reported having work zone speed laws and 49 states, including Utah, have special penalties for traffic violations in work zones, such as increased or doubled fines.

Tips for driving safely in work zones:

- **Expect the unexpected:** Normal speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be changed, and people may be working on or near the road.
- **Slow down:** Speeding is one of the major causes of work zone crashes.
- **Don't tailgate:** Keep a safe distance between you and the car ahead of you. The most common crashes in a highway work zone are rear end collisions.
- **Keep your distance:** Keep a safe distance between your vehicle and the construction workers and their equipment.
- **Pay attention to the signs:** The warning signs are there to help you and other drivers move safely through the work zone.
- **Obey road crew flaggers:** A flagger has the same authority as a regulatory sign, so you can be cited for disobeying their directions.
- **Stay alert and minimize distractions:** Dedicate your full attention to the roadway and avoid changing radio stations or using cell phones while driving.
- **Keep up with the traffic flow:** Motorists can help maintain traffic flow and posted speeds by merging as soon as possible. Don't drive right up to lane closures and try to merge.
- **Expect delays:** Schedule enough time to drive safely and check radio, TV and web sites (www.udot.utah.gov) for traffic information.
- **Be patient and stay calm:** The work zone crew is working to improve the road and your future drive.



SUMMER SAFETY REMINDERS



Parenting can be busy and chaotic and it may seem convenient to leave your child in the car while you fill a prescription, carry in the groceries or run into the store for a quick errand. However, leaving your

child unattended in the car is dangerous and oftentimes deadly. Children who are left alone in a vehicle, even for a few minutes, are at risk for:

Hyperthermia: Children and infants, especially those under age four, have a much harder time regulating their body temperatures and can reach high temperatures three to five times faster than adults.

Vehicle Set in Motion: Children left alone in vehicles can unintentionally set it in motion even if the engine is off.

Vehicle Theft: Vehicles can be stolen and the thief is unaware of children inside the vehicle.

Power Window Strangulation: Despite their convenience, electric power windows can be dangerous if not equipped with safety features.

Trunk Entrapment: Children can access vehicle

trunks even without having the keys. Trunk entrapment is dangerous due to poor air ventilation, high temperatures and humidity.

Prevention Tips:

- Never leave children alone in the vehicle, even for a minute.
- If you see a child alone in a vehicle, call 911.
- Teach your children to never play in or around a vehicle.
- Be especially careful when your routine changes. More children are killed when schedule changes occur, during family gatherings or the holidays as parents are more likely to forget that their child is in the back seat especially when they are asleep.
- Lock the power windows to avoid strangulation.
- Place your purse, briefcase, cell phone, house keys, or other important items on the floor next to your child. This will help remind you to not forget your child in the vehicle.
- Always lock your vehicle, even if it is in the garage or driveway, and keep the keys out of sight and out of reach of children.

Source: Safe Kids Utah

PREVENTING DRIVER DISTRACTION

Driver distraction has become a growing concern for transportation safety officials. At the top of their list is cell phone use while driving. On any given day more than 800,000 vehicles are driven by someone using a cell phone. A recent study by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) found drivers who send and receive text messages take their eyes off the road an average of 4.6 seconds out of every six seconds while texting. FMCSA offers the following advice on these and other driver distractions.

- **Turn off your cell phone while driving.** If you must use your cell phone, find a safe place to pull over and keep your conversation short.

• **Avoid fixating on objects not related to**

driving. All distractions can be dangerous, but drivers should pay attention to driving-related information and be aware of where vehicles are and be able to react quickly. Drivers can gaze blindly at the road or objects ahead without actually “seeing” them.

- **Avoid smoking while driving.** This act requires removing both hands from the wheel for an extended time period, which can increase the risk of being involved in a crash.
- **Minimize eating and drinking while driving.** Eat before getting behind the wheel or leave time to pull over and eat in a safe area.

For more information to educate employees on distracted driving, visit the Utah Safety Council’s website at www.utahsafetycouncil.org for Safety Fact Sheets under the Safety Resources tab.

Source: Traffic Safety June 2010



TIPS ON AVOIDING ROAD RAGE

How can you avoid becoming enraged on the road? It requires both a stronger focus on driving habits and a shift in our attitude toward driving. A few simple steps can help avoid going off the deep end while driving your car. Make sure you're getting enough sleep. Driving without enough rest can make you more irritable and dangerous. Give yourself plenty of time to get to where you're going. Often, frustrations bubble up when we feel we're running out of time, especially in traffic. Another strategy is to accept that you're running late, and you can't do anything about it. Avoid aggressive thoughts and concentrate on something neutral instead. As difficult as it may



seem, it's better to avoid venting frustrations. Instead, assume the driver doesn't mean to be unsafe or thoughtless. Self-control and self assessment are key components to keeping your cool. First, you have to recognize the moment you have a choice whether or not to act in anger. Then you must develop the willpower to choose not to indulge in negative behavior. Such a change may take a long time and involves changing perspectives about other drivers as well as changing your own driving behavior.

BUCKLE UP 4 LOVE THIS SUMMER



For nearly fifteen years the Utah Safety Council has coordinated a program known as *Buckle Up For Love*. This is a community program that aims to increase the awareness and use of child safety seats and safety belts for

children. It is purely educational and no law enforcement agencies are involved. The goal of the program is to educate the community that motor vehicle accidents are the biggest killer of children in Utah and that buckling up is the most effective and easiest way to prevent injury and death for all individuals.

When someone sees an unrestrained child in a moving motor vehicle, they can anonymously report the incident by filling out an online form, mailing in a report card or calling the hotline: **1-800-887-KIDS**. Report the license plate number, the time and location of the incident and a description of what was seen. The program coordinator then takes the license plate number and is able to retrieve the name

and address of the reported vehicle's registered owner. Owners of reported vehicles are sent a letter informing them that their car was seen being driven with an unrestrained child. They are given a packet of carseat information that will enable parents and caregivers to better protect their young passengers.

Utilizing the *Buckle Up For Love* program is a wonderful way to improve the safety and health of children in Utah. Since its beginning in 1995, *Buckle Up For Love* has received over 29,000 reports of unbuckled children.

The Utah Safety Council has numerous materials available for distribution to your employees that will promote the use of the *Buckle Up For Love* hotline and other educational materials. These materials are free of charge and include such items as brochures, wallet cards, posters, and observation cards used to report vehicles. Wallet cards and brochures are also available in Spanish. *Buckle Up For Love* materials can be ordered on the Utah Safety Council website www.utahsafetycouncil.org under the Safety Resources link. If you have questions please call Jennifer Marsden, Information Specialist at (801) 478-7878 ext. 303 or email her at jmarsden@utahsafetycouncil.org.





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NETS NEWS

If you would like to submit items for use in the newsletter, send them to:

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To find out how NETS can help your business, call (801) 478-7878 ext. 303 or (800) 933-5943 ext. 303. Membership is free so sign up today!



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