

Construction zone workers face high risk of injury

Written by Australian Business

September 27, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- No one who spends any amount of time driving in Illinois can claim to be a stranger to road construction. High traffic volume and cold winters mean that Illinois highways are in near-constant need of repair.

Most people think of road construction as a burden, and as something that is standing in the way of their ability to get to their destination in a timely fashion. As a result, many people disregard warning signs and speed through construction zones. In doing so, they fail to appreciate the extent to which their behavior puts others at risk.

Road construction workers have very dangerous jobs. According to data from the U.S. Department of Transportation, more than 20,000 people experience [work-related injuries](#) in road construction zones each year. Of these, approximately 12 percent can be traced back to car accidents or other transportation-related incidents. Further, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that traffic incidents were responsible for 76 percent of work zone occupational deaths in 2011.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Transportation reports that [car accidents](#) contributed to 576 work zone fatalities in the United States in 2010 alone. This number includes both construction workers and occupants of motor vehicles. Approximately 20 percent of these fatalities could be traced back to intoxicated driving, while speeding was a factor in 31 percent of the deaths. Rear-end collisions were the most common type of fatal work-zone accident.

Helping workers stay safe

Highway construction workers deserve to feel safe on the job. If you will be travelling through a work zone, you owe it to them to do your part to avoid accidents. Start by adhering to these rules:- Always obey the posted work zone speed limit. If the circumstances warrant it, consider going even slower.- Never operate a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or mind-altering prescription medication.- Avoid distractions whenever you enter a work zone. This means turning down the radio and avoiding distracting conversations, as well as refraining from making phone calls, eating, changing a CD or any other activity that takes your eyes (or your mind) off the road.- Stay aware of the other vehicles on the road, and leave enough space so that you can stop suddenly if you need to.

Lawsuits for injured construction workers

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Illinois law allows construction workers who are injured on the job to pursue workers' compensation benefits. These benefits will pay for medical care and will provide limited replacement for lost wages.

In addition, injured workers can pursue personal injury lawsuits against the drivers whose negligence contributed to the accident. In these lawsuits, accident victims can pursue financial compensation for damages such as pain and suffering, past and future medical expenses, lost wages and lost earning capacity.

If you or a loved one has been injured in a road construction accident, talk to an experienced Illinois personal injury attorney who can review your case and help you understand your options for moving forward.

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