

The Pennsylvania Turnpike has a message for drivers: slow down.

The Pennsylvania Turnpike is asking drivers to slow down and help keep workers safe. The message comes during National Work-Zone Awareness Week, when road safety officials nationwide raise attention for worker safety on the nation's highways.

In Pennsylvania, worker safety is receiving increased attention as turnpike officials gear up for \$1.3 billion worth of construction projects, including 62 road and bridge constructions. A significant construction season means more workers on the road "" and the potential for more vehicle accidents and worker injuries.

Last week, a Pennsylvania Turnpike worker was injured when a tractor trailer hit a truck he was working in. According to a news report, the worker was in an attenuator truck directing traffic due to a vehicle fire. The driver of the semi truck apparently looked away from the road as he reached for a drink and hit the stopped vehicle in the rear. Fortunately, no one was killed in the accident last week.

In general, however, work zones are dangerous places, since workers are often just feet from moving vehicles. In total, 33 employees of the turnpike have died on the job, and countless others have been injured.

The executive director of the turnpike says that work-zone accidents often happen in transition areas, when vehicles are forced to merge to one lane due to work. He says vehicles often speed up to skip ahead during the mergers, creating a potential safety issue. He asks drivers to pay attention and follow the signs.

Fines are more expensive in work zones, and troopers plan to monitor the speed of vehicles inside work zones. Troopers waiting outside the work zone will pull over drivers who were speeding.

Source: Fox 43 Central Pennsylvania, "[National work-zone awareness week](#)," Melanie Orlins, April 8, 2014