

Illinois Crash Reporting – Work Zones



WHAT IS A WORK ZONE?

A work zone is an area of a highway with construction, maintenance, or utility work activities. A work zone is typically marked by signs, channelizing devices, barriers, pavement markings, and/or work vehicles. It extends from the first warning sign or high-intensity rotating, flashing, oscillating, or strobe lights on a vehicle to the END ROAD WORK sign or the last Temporary Traffic Control (TTC) device (Federal Highway Administration *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices [MUTCD]*).

WHERE DOES A WORK ZONE BEGIN AND END?

As noted in the definition above, a work zone begins at the first warning sign or high-intensity rotating, flashing, oscillating, or strobe lights on a vehicle. In Illinois, the first warning sign for a work zone consists of an orange diamond sign displaying the message “ROAD CONSTRUCTION AHEAD” or “ROAD WORK AHEAD”. **Please note that Portable Changeable Message Signs (PCMS), by MUTCD definition, are separate from warning signs and therefore should not be used in determining the limits of a work zone. The display of warning messages or warning information on a PCMS does not make it a warning sign.**

The work zone ends with an “END ROAD WORK” sign or the last TTC device pertinent for that work activity.

OTHER WORK ZONE INFORMATION (ANSI D-16.1 – 2007, 2.5.24 and 2.7.8):

- Work zones also include roadway sections where there is ongoing, moving (mobile) work activity such as lane line painting or roadside mowing only if the beginning of the ongoing, moving (mobile) work activity is designated by warning signs or signals.
- A work zone crash is a motor vehicle traffic crash in which the first harmful event occurs within the boundaries of a work zone, or **on an approach to or exit from a work zone, resulting from an activity, behavior, or control related to the movement of the traffic units through the work zone.**

Examples:

- o An automobile on the roadway loses control within a work zone due to a shift or reduction in the travel lanes and crashes into another vehicle in the work zone.
 - o A rear-end crash occurs before the warning sign or high-intensity rotating, flashing, oscillating, or strobe lights on a vehicle indicating a work zone, caused by vehicles slowing or stopped on the roadway due to work zone activity.
- Workers do not have to be present at the time of the crash for it to be considered a work zone crash.