



P.O. Box 129
Rensselaer, IN 47978
219-866-4601
Toll Free 888-866-7362
Fax 219-866-2199
www.jasperremc.com

Work Zone Safety

Electric utility vehicles and workers often share streets and roadways with motorists in order to access overhead power lines and other electrical equipment. In observance of National Work Zone Safety Week (April 3rd to April 9th), Safe Electricity urges motorists to slow down and pay close attention to these work crews while driving.

"Power poles and electrical equipment line our streets and highways; narrow right-of-way areas often require crews to place their equipment in traffic lanes," says Molly Hall, director of Safe Electricity. "Their work activities benefit all of us, and like everyone, they deserve a safe workplace."

"Be alert to utility crews and other work zone workers for their safety as well as yours." According to statistics from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the number of people killed in motor vehicle crashes in work zones has been on the increase, rising from 693 in 1997 to 1,181 in 2002. In addition to the fatalities, more than 40,000 people are injured each year in motor vehicle work zone crashes. Many of these accidents could be prevented by simply slowing down and paying attention.

Fatal work zone crashes, regardless of whether a large truck was involved or not, occurred most often in the summer and the fall. Almost three times as many work zone crashes happen on weekdays compared to weekends, so be extra cautious when you are driving to and from work.

You can help prevent fatalities and injuries this year by following a few of these easy steps:

- Don't tailgate: Most crashes in work zones are rear-end collisions.
- Keep a safe distance between your vehicle and traffic barriers, trucks, construction equipment and workers.
- Be patient: Traffic delays are sometimes unavoidable.
- Merge early and be courteous to other drivers.
- Turn on your headlights at dusk.
- Keep up with the traffic flow: Don't become distracted just because your vehicle is stationary for a moment.
- Minimize distractions: Avoid using a phone or radio.
- The most common crash in a roadway work zone is the rear-end collision, so remember to leave two seconds of braking distance between you and the car in front of you. The amount of space required to provide two seconds of stopping time will increase the faster you're driving.
- Make sure to slow down when the sign says to. A car traveling 60 miles per hour (MPH) travels 88 feet per second. If you're going 60 MPH and pass a sign that states, "Road Work 1,500 feet," you'll be in that work zone in 17 seconds.

Safe Electricity is an electrical safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of several dozen organizations, including electric utilities and cooperatives, educators and other entities committed to promoting electrical safety.