



## COUNTY ROAD ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **MDOT and CRAM partner to bring attention to National Work Zone Awareness Week**

**April 19, 2010** -- As orange barrels return across the state, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM) have joined efforts in recognition of National Work Zone Awareness Week, which runs through Friday. This year's theme is, "Work Zones Need Our Undivided Attention."

In 2009, there were a total of 5,153 crashes, 1,375 injuries, and 19 fatalities in work zones on state, county, and local roads in Michigan.

"Many of these crashes are preventable," said State Transportation Director Kirk T. Steudle. "We ask that motorists pay attention at all times and drive as if their life depends on it. One fatality is too many."

State and local road agencies urge motorists to unplug from distractions as they enter work zones to keep both motorists and road workers safe. Studies show that driving while using a cell phone is just as dangerous as driving while intoxicated.

"We have reached a point where it is socially unacceptable to drink and drive," said County Road Association of Michigan Director John Niemela. "Our goal is to adopt this same attitude toward distracted driving, especially in work zones."

Across the country, more than 700 people died in work zone crashes in 2009. Four out of every five highway work zone fatalities are drivers and their passengers.

The National Work Zone Awareness Week campaign was initiated in 1999 by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA), and the Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (ASHTO) to build public awareness of work zone safety. A National Work Zone Awareness Week public service announcement is available on YouTube at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLc7jL7M6P0>.

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**Construction work zones need your undivided attention.**