

Chicago at Center Stage for National Work Zone Safety Week; IRTBA, ARTBA Among Groups to Promote Work Zone Safety

IRTBA Press Release

April 10, 2018



For Immediate Release
Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Chicago at Center Stage for National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week

***IRTBA, ARTBA Among Groups to Promote Work Zone Safety
National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week is April 9-13***

April 10, 2018-- The Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association (IRTBA) was among the organizations present at a national press event Tuesday to support and advocate for safer work zones at the start of this construction season.

Governor Bruce Rauner and **IDOT Secretary Randy Blankenhorn**, along with IRTBA and our national affiliate, the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), as well as other industry and agency partners called on motorists to obey work zone laws for speeding and to follow the law banning the use of mobile devices while driving in work zones.



Photo courtesy of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)

"IRTBA is very proud to stand alongside Governor Rauner and Secretary Blankenhorn to represent industry at this year's national event," said Mark Barkowski, chairman of the IRTBA and vice president of F.H. Paschen, a commercial construction and contracting company based in Chicago.

National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week is taking place April 9 through April 13, 2018, and occurs every year to raise awareness about hazards and the need for extra caution in work zone areas. This year, National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week featured Chicago as the host city. The month of April is also National Distracted Driving Awareness Month.

As of January 1, 2014, Illinois drivers have been banned from using hand-held cell phones and electronic devices while driving. Following the law is particularly important in work zones, where large equipment is entering in and out of the job site, the width of normal traffic lanes tends to be smaller, and detours, lane changes, and uneven pavement surfaces are common and require focus.

"It is more important than ever that motorists be aware that the law banning cell phones does require that drivers not be on the phone in a work zone -- even if its hands free. Even hands-free phone use in work zones and school zones is against the law. It is imperative that motorists focus on the road in construction zones," said IRTBA President & CEO Mike Sturino.

Both National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week and National Distracted Driving Awareness Month coincide with the start of the construction season. IRTBA wants motorists to be aware of posted speed limits in work zones and the stiff fines for violators. Photo speed enforcement is used by Illinois State Police when workers are present to increase safety in work zones on Illinois highways. Court appearances are mandatory for work zone speeding violations.

IRTBA and ARTBA, along with IDOT, Illinois Tollway, and other industry partners are banning together and holding events throughout the state and hosting social media campaigns this week to demonstrate to motorists the critical need to follow these laws, which will lead to a safer Illinois.

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About Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association

The Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association (IRTBA) has spent 80 years as the leading transportation industry trade association in Illinois. IRTBA member firms design, build, and maintain the state highways, transit systems, railways, and aviation systems. The core purpose of IRTBA's existence is to advance and promote the transportation design and construction industry in Illinois.

