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Governor Cuomo Announces Crackdown on Work Zone Violations Across the State

New York State Department of Transportation, Thruway Authority and New York State Police Launch 'Operation Hardhat' Across the State

Reckless and Distracted Drivers Will Be Targeted in Active Highway Construction and Maintenance Zones

More than 1,000 Tickets Issued in Work Zones During Last Statewide Operation

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the start of "Operation Hardhat," a statewide traffic enforcement detail targeting motorists who drive recklessly through work zones. The operation is a joint initiative between the New York State Police, Department of Transportation and Thruway Authority, to crack down on work zone violations and highlight the importance of safe driving when encountering construction, maintenance and emergency operations along state highways.

"New York's highway workers and first responders put their personal safety on the line every day to help ensure our roads and bridges remain safe and in good repair," **Governor Cuomo said.** "As New Yorkers, we have a responsibility to keep these essential workers out of harm's way - and that means slowing down, moving over and using common sense. We have zero tolerance for those who drives recklessly and endanger the lives of others."

State Troopers will patrol active highway work zones throughout the summer at locations along the Adirondack Northway, the Thruway and other highways where maintenance and construction activities are underway. Additionally, DOT, Thruway and State Police plan to partner on additional unannounced enforcement efforts in construction zones in the coming months.

Troopers will be present within the work zones, dressed as highway maintenance workers, to identify motorists who disobey flagging personnel, speed through the work zone or violate the state's Move Over Law, which applies to both emergency and maintenance vehicles. DOT, Thruway and the State Police are also planning a statewide enforcement and education campaign later this summer in an effort to continue promoting driver awareness and the need to follow New York's Move Over Law.

State Department of Transportation Commissioner Marie Therese Dominguez said, "Safety is always the top priority of the New York State Department of Transportation and a big part of that is protecting the health and well-being of the dedicated men and women who work to keep our highways and bridges safe. Operation Hardhat is an effective way to raise awareness about dangers our highway workers face each day they are on the job and the need for motorists to eliminate distractions and

reduce speeds in work zones. We appreciate the partnership of the New York State Police in keeping our workers and the traveling public safe."

New York State Police Superintendent Keith M. Corlett said, "The safety and well-being of highway and construction workers are essential as they improve the roadways of our state. It is important that motorists are aware of their responsibility to follow the rules of the road and know that violations of the Move Over Law and work zone intrusions will not be tolerated. We ask all motorists to operate safely by obeying posted speed limits, staying in designated lanes, and being cognizant of workers and equipment in work zones."

Thruway Authority Executive Director Matthew J. Driscoll said, "Highway and emergency workers are real people who just want to go home to their families after a long day of work. They deserve our complete attention as they do their jobs to make the roadways safer. I encourage everyone driving through a work zone to drive like you or a loved one works there - slow down and be alert for them."

During last year's "Operation Hardhat" enforcement with the State Police, there were 1,048 tickets issued across the state, including 493 speed violations, 92 cell phone violations, 94 seatbelt and two child restraint violations, 72 move over violations, eight failures to obey a traffic control device, two failures to obey a flagger, two DWI and 283 other violations.

Motorists are reminded to Move Over a lane, if safely possible, or slow down significantly whenever encountering roadside vehicles displaying red, white, blue, amber or green lights, including maintenance and construction vehicles in work zones.

Motorists are urged to slow down and drive responsibly in work zones. Fines are doubled for speeding in a work zone. Convictions of two or more speeding violations in a work zone could result in the suspension of an individual's driver license.

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