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Give road crews a break: National Grid urges drivers to slow down in work zones

National Work Zone Awareness Week brings attention to spring construction season

Submitted by National Grid

National Grid reminds drivers to slow down when approaching work zones on roads and highways as part of National Work Zone Awareness Week. The annual commemoration, promoted by the U.S. Department of Transportation, takes place April 17-21 and marks the start of spring construction season.

The onset of spring means National Grid crews will begin performing necessary infrastructure upgrades along roads, and some may require roadway work areas, including lane or shoulder closures. Observing warnings is a matter of safety for both our crews and drivers. Slowing down and paying attention to your surroundings can ensure the well-being of all involved.

Struck-by incidents are a leading cause of death among construction workers and the leading cause of nonfatal injuries in the construction industry. In 2021, 72 workers were killed, and 400 were injured in struck-by accidents in work zones, according to the most current data available from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

National Grid workers go through extensive training on work zone safety. Crews on duty in work zones or near our infrastructure wear high-visibility garments, eye



Image courtesy of National Grid

protection and hard hats.

The U.S. Department of Transportation offers the following tips for driving safely through work zones:

✓ **Plan Ahead:** Research your route before heading out. When possible, avoid work zones and use detours when available.

✓ **Stay Focused:** Keeping your eyes on the road is especially important in work zones. Note all instructions on work zone signage, including speed limits, lane changes

and shifts, and any closures. Keep both hands on the wheel and off your cell phone, radio, navigation device, and food and drink.

✓ **Slow Down:** Many states require drivers to reduce their speed in work zones and follow the posted speeds. Drivers in Massachusetts and New York face increase fines and other penalties for speeding in a work zone.

✓ **Move into the Open Lane:** When lanes close, move over as soon as it is safe and possible. Pay

attention to your blind spot for other vehicles. Massachusetts and New York each have "move over" laws that include fines for drivers that fail to move to an open lane when stopped vehicles with flashing lights, such as utility vehicles, are at work.

✓ **Keep Your Distance:** Rear-end collisions are very common in work zones, as cars wait until the last minute to change lanes or stop quickly. When driving, leave sufficient distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. Never cut off a bus or large commercial vehicle, like a box truck or 18-wheeler, as those vehicles require more braking distance to reach a stop.

About National Grid

National Grid is an electricity, natural gas, and clean energy delivery company serving more than 20 million people through our networks in New York and Massachusetts. National Grid is focused on building a path to a more affordable, reliable clean energy future through our fossil-free vision. National Grid is transforming our electricity and natural gas networks with smarter, cleaner, and more resilient energy solutions to meet the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

For more information, visit our website, follow us on Twitter, watch us on YouTube, "Like" us on Facebook and find our photos on Instagram.

Yard spring cleaning safety: AAA shares tips for staying safe while sprucing up the yard

By AAA of Western and Central New York

Warmer weather is finally here! It's time for backyard barbecues, pool parties and picnic playdates – but first comes spring-cleaning in the house and the yard. Even the most experienced gardener should follow these safety tips from AAA Insurance:

Mowing Your Lawn

✓ Know how to quickly shut off your mower in case of an emergency.

✓ Never leave a lawn mower running unattended.

✓ Make sure all lawn mower safety equipment is intact, and check for frayed or cut wires before mowing.

✓ Never remove safety features

such as blade guards or spark arrestors, which prevent fires.

✓ Remove rocks, sticks and other debris from the yard before mowing. If they're picked up and thrown out from the lawn mower, these objects can cause serious injury. Metal blades striking rocks can create sparks that start fires.

✓ Never attempt to unclog or work on a lawn mower while the engine is on.

✓ Keep young children away from the mower.

✓ Only add fuel to your mower when the engine is cool, and always use the recommended grade of fuel.

Trimming Trees

✓ Prune tree limbs regularly to

keep them from damaging your home, decks and outbuildings. Even after the winter weather has passed, tree branches can break due to age or disease. If a tree is too close to your home, consider having it removed.

Cleaning Roof Gutters

✓ Now that winter is over, remove leaves, sticks and other debris from roof gutters so water can flow freely when it rains. Make sure gutters are secure, and downspouts drain away from your foundation. If possible, extend the bottom of the downspout away from your home by at least 6 feet.

Removing Yard Waste

✓ Consider composting leaves,

sticks, grass cuttings and other yard waste instead of burning them or putting them in a landfill. Burning yard waste may not be legal in your area, and puts your home at risk of fire. You can also contact your local sanitation department for the best way to get rid of yard debris.

To learn more about homeowners insurance and other specialty or auto products, visit www.AAA.com/Insurance, or your local AAA branch office.

AAA Western and Central New York provides more than 862,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Visit AAA at www.AAA.com.

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