**Work Ahead: City of Portland Continues Critical Maintenance and Repair Work with**

**COVID-19 Safety Measures**

*National Work Zone Awareness Week with tips for safe travel in work zones. Videos show the work of infrastructure crew members to keep roads safe, critical water flowing.*

Rain, wind, snow, sun or pandemic – the City of Portland’s crews are out on city streets every day of the year working to repair, improve and maintain Portland’s street, water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure. During the 2020 National Work Zone Awareness Week, the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), the Portland Water Bureau and the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) remind people to keep their distance from crews at work and slow down when traveling through work zones.

Thank you for your patience as we do this crucial work to keep our city moving. We are joining in with Portlanders to make noise at 7 p.m. nightly for the #PDXThanksYou campaign, and supporting them and all Portlanders in continuing to work hard to provide crucial maintenance and infrastructure repairs and services. Feel free to show your appreciation to our crews with a thumbs up or a wave from a safe distance the next time you pass by.

During the COVID-19 public health crisis, the City of Portland infrastructure bureaus are taking extra measures to protect the public, construction crews, and our employees. Crews have been directed and supported to follow the CDC guidelines for protecting themselves and the public. Protocols are in place for physical distancing, hygiene, and safety. Like other essential workers, crew members have a higher risk of exposure to COVID-19 due to their work in the public right of way.

To further protect yourself and city workers, the bureaus ask Portlanders to follow these safety steps:

* **Keep your distance.** For the health and safety for everyone, please give our crews the space to complete their work while maintaining proper distance. We understand that as people are spending time at home, they are curious about what we’re doing in their neighborhoods. We have a few videos about the essential work that continues through the pandemic.
* **SLOW DOWN.**  Speed is a major factor in crashes. If you must drive, follow the speed limit. Portland Police are still enforcing traffic laws to keep Portlanders safe.
* **Use an alternate route**. When you can, avoid streets with posted work zones.
* **Obey all speed and warning signs**. Work zone signs are for anyone traveling through – whether the person is walking, biking, rolling or driving. They are there for your safety and will help prevent a collision.
* **Be alert**. Put down your phone and pay attention to the road conditions ahead of you.
* **Carefully move over**. When possible give workers more room between them and your vehicle, but do not veer into an oncoming traffic lane.
* **Keep your distance**. Rear-end crashes are extremely common in work zones – maintain extra space between you and the person in front of you at all times.
* **Stay clear of construction vehicles**. Heavy vehicles travel in and out of the work areas and can make sudden moves. We know it’s interesting to see our machines at work, but please keep a safe distance from the work zone if you plan to watch.
* **Expect delays and be kind**. Our goal is to get you through our work zone safely, while also completing our street improvements in an efficient manner. We appreciate your understanding.

Watch these videos of PBOT and Water Bureau Maintenance Crews keeping the street safe, the water on and sharing why safety around work zones is so important:

[PBOT Maintenance Operations staff explain importance of work zone safety](https://youtu.be/lx3RkJjkjSE)

[Operating Engineer checking pump station](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fk5k7ZAEmRs&t=2s)

[From Twitter, M&C making a repair downtown](https://twitter.com/portlandwater/status/1171911669838016512?s=20)

As the construction season begins, crews will be out in neighborhoods across the city doing essential work such as filling potholes, renewing fire hydrants, restriping roads, fixing leaks, and clearing catch basins, building curb ramps and sidewalks, grinding and paving roads, and more.

PBOT has been in modified operations since March 17 and has implemented specific measures to ensure the safety of our crews and contractors. We're focused on delivering critical repairs and maintenance while taking specific steps to keep our workforce safe. These include modified shifts, physical distancing, and other precautions based on current guidelines from local, state, and federal health officials.

Environmental Services is working throughout the city to upgrade critical sewer and stormwater infrastructure to prevent sewage releases and protect public health, property and our environment. Find out projects in your area and sign up for updates at [portlandoregon.gov/bes/construction](http://Www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/construction).

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**About National Work Zone Awareness Week**

[National Work Zone Awareness Week](https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/outreach/wz_awareness.htm) runs from April 20-24, 2020. Work zones play a key role in maintaining and upgrading Portland's roadways, water and sewer infrastructure and more. Unfortunately, daily changes in traffic patterns, narrowed rights-of-way, and other construction activities often create a combination of factors resulting in crashes, injuries, and even fatalities. These crashes also cause excessive delays, especially given the constrained driving environment. Recent statistics from the National Highway Safety Administration’s Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) show there were a total of 158,000 work zone crashes total in 2016 across the United States—of which 42,000 were injury-involved crashes that resulted in 61,000 injuries. On average, in 2015: A work zone crash occurred once every 5.4 minutes.

**About PBOT**

*The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) is the steward of the City’s transportation system, and a community partner in shaping a livable city. We plan, build, manage and maintain an effective and safe transportation system that provides access and mobility. Learn more on Twitter @PBOTinfo and* [*portlandoregon.gov/transportation*](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/)*.*

**About the Portland Water Bureau**

*The Portland Water Bureau serves water to almost a million people in the Portland area. Portland’s water system includes two great water sources, 53 tanks and reservoirs, and 2,200 miles of pipes. With 600 employees working on everything from water treatment to customer service, the Water Bureau is committed to serving excellent water every minute of every day.* Learn more on Twitter @PortlandWater and [portlandoregon.gov/water](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/water/index.cfm?).

**About the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services**

*The City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services - your sewer and stormwater utility - provides Portland residents with programs to protect water quality and public health, including wastewater collection and treatment, sewer construction and maintenance, stormwater management, and stream and watershed restoration.  Follow on Twitter - @BESPortland. On the web:* [*portlandoregon.gov/bes/news*](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/46634)*.*

