

Traffic part of the issue with Transportation Safety Awareness Month

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 life is one too many; there are many steps people can take to reduce risks.

May is traditionally the kick-off for road construction season in Oregon. Construction work zones will appear on streets, highways and bridges. Billboards, bus boards and public service announcements will remind people to "Respect the cone zone, better roads ahead." That means pay atten-

tion and slow down in work zones. How Oregonians drive in work zones has a direct impact on their own safety, as well as the safety of workers. For 2010, preliminary numbers indicate nine people died in work zone crashes. In 2009, the number of fatalities was 18, while in 2008, there were five. All of the people killed were drivers or their passengers.

Although the majority of Oregonians do buckle up, every

year, lack of safety belt use is a major factor in more than half of crash fatalities. For child passengers, it's especially important to have the right safety seat or booster seat. According to the Center for Disease Control, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children ages 3 to 14. Beginning May 23, Oregon State Police, county sheriffs' offices, and local police departments are participating in the "Click It or

Ticket" campaign, focusing on enforcing Oregon's safety belt and child occupant protection laws. People who need help with child safety or booster seats can attend a free child safety seat clinic. They're held throughout the year at fire stations, car dealerships and other locations around the state (see www.childsafetyseat.org for a complete listing).

Although the numbers show improvements in many areas of

traffic safety, for pedestrians, the number of fatalities is up. Preliminary data shows 62 pedestrian fatalities in 2010 vs. 39 in 2009. Pedestrian fatalities make up 20 percent (62 of 317) of all motor vehicle crash fatalities for 2010. Visibility is very important for pedestrian safety. Pedestrians need to take steps to make sure motorists can see them, and motorists need to make sure they see pedestri-

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