

ORANGE CONES. NO PHONES.

Distracted Driving on I-95 in Northern Virginia

When the 95 Express Lanes open they will provide drivers with faster travel, new choices and better carpooling. In the short-term, the 29-mile Express Lanes corridor will be an active work zone – leaving no room for driver distractions.

Distracted Driving a Problem on I-95

Transurban-Fluor and AAA Mid-Atlantic conducted a survey in early 2013 of 943 drivers who frequently travel through the 95 Express Lanes construction zone. The survey revealed that distracted driving is a major safety issue in the 95 Express Lanes construction corridor.

56 percent of I-95 drivers use their phone behind the wheel:



28%
read or
write texts

24%
talk on the phone
without a hands-free
device

39%
talk on the phone
with a hands-free
device

Of those who use their phone while driving, 77 percent recall doing so in the past week. Almost all – 94 percent – of I-95 drivers have seen someone engage in dangerous, distracted behaviors while driving.

Distracted Driving is Dangerous

Eight out of 10 traffic crashes in Virginia are related to a distracted driving incident¹. Texting and cell phone use while driving dramatically increases the odds of an incident or near miss. On I-95, nearly a quarter of drivers have had an incident or near miss while driving distracted.

95 Express Lanes Work Zone

95 Express Lanes construction is underway along a 29-mile stretch of I-95 from the Edsall Road area in Fairfax County to Garrisonville Road in Stafford County. The project includes:

- Converting the HOV lanes to express lanes
- Adding a third lane to the system for 14 miles from the Edsall Road area south to Prince William Parkway
- Extending the current HOV system nine miles south to Stafford County
- Building nine new bridges including four flyovers
- Approximately 1,500 workers each day in the project corridor
- Between 130,000-150,000 hours working “in the field” each month

Construction on the 95 Express Lanes is ramping up this summer and drivers will encounter frequent lane closures, reduced shoulders and constantly changing work zones – leaving no room for error.

¹<http://www.drivesmartva.org/?/current-projects/distracted-driving/>

In anticipation of the busy summer construction schedule, drivers should expect delays on I-95. To ensure a smooth trip through the construction zone, drivers should budget extra travel time or plan alternate routes. Drivers should also focus on the road and stay off their phones.

Drivers Aware of Risks, but Reluctant to Change Their Phone Behavior

Three out of four I-95 drivers recall reading or seeing a recent news story detailing the dangers of distracted driving. Despite awareness of the dangers, distracted drivers are not changing their habits – even in construction zones.

- One in three drivers distracted by cell phones has not changed their habits while driving through the I-95 construction zone
- Just 20 percent of drivers have specifically opted not to read/write texts or emails in construction zones
- Just 14 percent of drivers have specifically opted not to talk on their cell phone in construction zones

Phone Use Multiplies Risk

Texting and other cell phone use dramatically increases the odds of an incident or near miss.

Texters

Nearly **3x** as likely**



42% of those who read or write texts while driving have had an incident or near miss

Phone Users*

Exactly **2x** as likely**



30% of those who use their cell phone while driving have had an incident or near miss

Non-Phone Users

Least likely



Non-phone users are the least likely to have had an incident or near miss at just **15%**

*Those who read or write texts or talk on the phone with or without a hands-free device while driving **Compared to non-phone users

Work Zone Safety Tips²

- Stay alert – Expect anything to occur when entering a work zone
- Pay close attention – Signs and work zone flaggers save lives
- Turn on your headlights – Workers and other motorists must see you
- Don't tailgate – Unexpected stops frequently occur in work zones
- Don't speed – Note the speed limits in and around the work zone
- Keep up with traffic flow – Dedicate your full attention to the road and those traveling around you
- Don't change lanes in the work zone – The time saved just isn't worth it
- Minimize distractions – Avoid changing radio stations and using cell phones
- Expect the unexpected – Keep an eye out for workers and their equipment
- Be patient – Remember, the work zone crew members are working to improve your future ride

Orange Cones. No Phones.

Region-wide safety campaign aimed at eliminating distracted driving in the 95 Express Lanes construction corridor.

The 95 Express Lanes "Orange Cones. No Phones." campaign is based on the 495 Express Lanes distracted driving awareness campaign. The campaign was launched during construction of the 495 Express Lanes in fall 2009 by Transurban-Fluor and AAA Mid-Atlantic with support from Virginia Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Virginia State Police and Fairfax County Police. The Orange Cones. No Phones. program was launched in the 95 Express Lanes project corridor in spring 2013.

²<http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/prog-wzsa-default.asp>