MARTIN & JONES PLLC
Attorneys at Law

Have you ever heard the slogan "Give 'em a brake?" It was a part of a campaign the North Carolina Industrial Commission promoted to protect highway workers who could be injured by traffic in work zones.

Those workers deserve caution and respect. But it turns out they're usually not the ones at the greatest risk of injury in work zones. Drivers and passengers are injured in work zones far more often than highway workers. Work zone car accidents are extremely common and often fatal.

People injured in work zone accidents often do not understand the need to act quickly to protect their legal and financial rights. While it's understandable that the urge to focus on physical and mental recovery takes the attention away from other issues, accident victims face a very real danger of losing the ability to receive fair compensation for the harm they've suffered if they do not take the necessary steps right after the accident.

This is a situation where it is extremely helpful to establish a relationship with a personal injury lawyer early on. The legal team can take the necessary steps to secure recovery while the accident victim and their family work toward healing.

Surprising Statistics About Work Zone Accidents in North Carolina

A work zone is defined by federal regulations as a section of highway where construction, maintenance, or work activities are in progress. Work zones are typically defined by barriers, signs, traffic-control devices, pavement markings, and work vehicles. The area of a work zone legally extends from the first sign (or the light on a work vehicle) until a sign that says "End Road Work" or the placement of the final temporary traffic control device.

Workers in these zones are obviously vulnerable to injury if struck by a vehicle passing through. But statistics from surveys conducted by the American Construction Association show that drivers and passengers in those vehicles are at greater risk. Results in North Carolina show that 24 percent of contractors experienced a work zone crash that resulted in the death of a worker, but 44 percent of contractors reported that drivers or passengers died in an accident at one of their work zone sites. In 11 percent of those situations, four people riding in vehicles were killed in a work zone collision.

Why Construction Zones are So Dangerous for Drivers and Passengers

Drivers frequently underestimate the risks of driving through construction zones. Lanes are often narrower, and they shift course in unexpected patterns. Traffic may come to a sudden stop. Drivers get confused by signs—or they fail to notice or follow instructions, and their conduct puts others at risk.

When drivers have a tendency to engage in negligent or risky behavior, such as speeding, tailgating, or driving while distracted, on a regular basis, a work zone amplifies the risks created by this behavior. The result is often a collision between vehicles or a vehicle crashing into a concrete barrier, heavy machinery, or other unforgiving objects. Work zone collisions can trigger a chain reaction affecting multiple vehicles. The cause of the crash could be another driver's negligence, a lack of proper signage, or other actions by the construction company.

Why You Need to Act Quickly After a Work Zone Accident

There are three primary reasons that it is important to take the right steps as soon as possible after a work zone crash. These steps preserve your legal, financial, and physical well-being.

Evidence is Likely to Disappear

To recover compensation after any motor vehicle accident, you need to secure evidence to show what happened and why it was someone else's fault. Information about the accident scene is very important. When an accident occurs in a work zone, information about the scene needs to be preserved as quickly as possible because it will change more quickly than most accident scenes.

Signs will be taken down, equipment will be loaded up, and barriers will be removed. Collecting evidence about the accident scene becomes a race against time. If you are working with a dedicated attorney, your legal team can get out and take photos, record measurements, and secure other evidence that can be used later to prove that someone else's negligent actions led to your injuries.

You Don't Want to Make Mistakes That Cannot Be Undone

It is not uncommon for accident victims to make mistakes that jeopardize their ability to recover after an accident. They may say something that can be taken out of context and used to argue that they are admitting responsibility for causing the collision. They may do something that gives defense teams a reason to argue that the accident victim wasn't actually hurt in the collision. They may agree to make a statement or accept a settlement without

understanding how it impacts their legal rights.

These mistakes cannot be undone, but they can be prevented. The easiest way to prevent these types of errors is to engage a knowledgeable accident attorney and allow your lawyer to handle communications with the insurance companies and corporate legal teams so that you can focus on rebuilding your life in peace.

You Don't Want to Risk Your Health or Ability to Recover

It is extremely important to get a medical exam right after an accident. This protects your health because doctors may detect signs of injuries that aren't obvious, such as damage to internal organs. Getting examined by the doctor immediately after a collision also provides you with medical evidence to show that your injuries are the direct result of the crash. If you wait to see the doctor, the defense team will argue that something else caused your injuries or that you aren't really hurt at all.

Martin & Jones Can Help You Take the Necessary Steps to Protect Yourself After a Work Zone Accident

If a work zone accident resulted from negligence on the part of a government employee, then you may have much less time than usual to prepare to file a personal injury lawsuit. But even if a government entity is not involved, it is vital to act quickly to preserve your claim. Allow Martin & Jones to assist.

Our personal injury team has decades of experience helping car accident victims in North Carolina obtain full compensation for their losses in a wide array of situations, including collisions that occur in work zones. For a free case evaluation and consultation to discuss how our team could help with your case, call us at 800-662-1234 or contact us online today.

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