



## *News from the Ohio Turnpike*

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**For Immediate Release:**

### **Ohio's Powerhouse Safety Groups Send Strong Message on Move Over Law**

*OSU study sheds new light on the public's ongoing reluctance to follow the law*

BEREA, OH (Oct. 16, 2020) – AAA, the Ohio Turnpike, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) are recognizing National Move Over Awareness Day on Monday, Oct. 19.

The group is reminding Ohioans about the law that requires drivers to move over for any vehicle with flashing lights parked on the roadside. The four organizations are also releasing new data showing gaps in knowledge about Ohio's Move Over law.

Across the nation, one tow truck driver is killed alongside the road every six days. In addition, 23 highway workers and one law enforcement officer are killed each month while performing their duties on American roadways.

Last year on Ohio's roads, drivers failing to move over struck snowplows more than 200 times, road construction equipment more than 600 times, tow trucks 341 times and law enforcement vehicles more than 1,000 times, according to ODOT crash data.

"It's alarming to see the rise of crashes happening throughout our state," said Governor Mike DeWine. "We need to remember that when we are behind the wheel, we have to pay attention and stay focused on the road."

In 2019, the Ohio State Highway Patrol issued 7,829 citations for those failing to move over or slow down. So far this year, there have been 3,576 citations issued. Additionally, there have been 3,541 work zone related crashes this year, resulting in 17 fatalities and 951 injuries. There have also been more than 500 crashes involving law enforcement, construction and utility workers, and tow truck drivers being struck while working along the roadside.

"It's important to be focused on driving and being aware of your surroundings," said Colonel Richard Fambro of the Ohio State Highway Patrol. "Moving over or slowing down for stationary vehicles with flashing lights isn't just the law, it's the right thing to do. Please do your part to protect those who work along Ohio's roadways."

### **New Ohio Survey Results Show Room for Improvement:**

A new survey of Ohio drivers conducted by Brittany Shoots-Reinhard, research assistant professor at The Ohio State University Department of Psychology, found gaps in Ohioans' knowledge of the state's Move Over law, especially when it comes to construction crews and tow trucks.

More than 90% of survey participants responded that they know the Move Over law applies to law enforcement and emergency vehicles, compared to 70% for construction vehicles, 62% for tow trucks and 50% for disabled vehicles with flashing lights.

"Most Ohioans have heard the phrase, Move Over, Slow Down, but many don't realize it applies to all stationary vehicles with flashing lights, no matter the color," said Executive Director Ferzan M. Ahmed, P.E., Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission. "This is deeply concerning when it comes to keeping all roadside workers and motorists safe from harm."

In addition, distraction is likely to play a role in failing to move over. Nearly a quarter (24%) of participants reported that when they hadn't moved over it was because they didn't notice the lights. Many drivers were also unsure what to do on two-lane roads.

"This data is a clear indication that we have work to do in educating Ohio drivers on when to move over and how to do it safely," said ODOT Director Jack Marchbanks. "Tackling Ohio's distracted driving problem is also pivotal to saving lives on our roadways. If you're not focused on driving, you may never see that roadside worker."

### **Education is Key:**

To help educate the public, AAA, the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission, ODOT and the Ohio State Highway Patrol published a [VIDEO](#) earlier this year. In addition, the organizations are partnering on social media messaging with #MoveOverOhio.

ODOT will also use more than 130 digital message boards along highways to remind drivers about the state's Move Over law.

"Law enforcement, tow truck operators, construction workers and more all work tirelessly to make our roads safer for all of us," said David McMullen, president and CEO of AAA Ohio Auto Club. "In return we owe them a safe place to work so they may return to their families each day. We encourage everyone to spread the word -- move over and slow down for all roadside workers."

For more information visit [MoveOver.ohio.gov](http://MoveOver.ohio.gov).

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