



## OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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<http://www.dot.state.oh.us>

**For Immediate Release**

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### **NATIONAL MEMORIAL HONORS THREE OHIOANS KILLED IN WORK ZONES**

*Memorial Comes to Columbus to Highlight Work Zone Safety*

**(COLUMBUS)** - The names of three Ohio highway workers who died in work zone accidents this year will be added to the National Work Zone Memorial during a ceremony today in Columbus.

The traveling exhibition, managed by the American Traffic Safety Services Foundation (ATSSF), stopped in Columbus to promote safe driving in highway work zones. The memorial honors the thousands of men, women and children who have died in work zone accidents.

The names of Allen Cappel of Uhrichsville, John Webb Jr. of Carrollton, and James Keith of Stow will be added to the memorial.

Cappel and Webb were ODOT employees killed in September when their state car was hit by a dump truck during the inspection of a highway project along U.S. Route 250 near New Philadelphia. Keith, an employee of the city of Stow, was killed in May by a truck while setting up a work zone along the state Route 8 median at the Graham Road overpass in Stow.

"We gather today to recognize their contribution. Each day, hundreds of thousands of workers like them get up and go to work in one of the most dangerous jobs in the nation," said ODOT Director Gordon Proctor. "These workers are on the front lines of our nation's roads and highways, repairing and rebuilding them so people can travel to work, go to the store, attend soccer practice and visit family and friends."

Last year, there were 6,500 work zone crashes in Ohio – 1,500 people were injured and 24 people died. According to Ohio crash statistics, driver error accounted for 87 percent of all work zone crashes and 92 percent of all injuries and fatalities. The most common causes were following too close, failure to yield, improper lane changing and speeding. The Federal Highway Administration reports that, nationwide, more than 40,000 people are injured and 1,000 are killed each year.

In an effort to prevent these types of accidents, ODOT spends about \$30 million annually to maintain more lanes of traffic, speed the pace of construction and conduct more work on weekends and nights when fewer people are on the road. The department employs full-time work zone managers to design and monitor work zones for increased safety.

ODOT's safety efforts were further increased this year by Gov. Bob Taft when he unveiled the Jobs and Progress plan. The plan will provide \$65 million annually to improve the safety of congested, high-crash locations on Ohio's freeways. The plan will also reconstruct key interstate bottlenecks, increasing the number of work zones and the need for improved safety.

"Despite the great precautions ODOT takes while working on the roads, motorists need to help by exercising good judgment and common sense," Proctor said. "No matter how important the trip it's not worth a life."

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