

Motor vehicle crashes were the leading cause of line of duty deaths in 2024 for Texas peace officers¹. Up to 20% of crashes are estimated to be secondary in nature, meaning that they occur as the result of an earlier incident. Establishing a safe zone at the scene of a crash is imperative to protect emergency personnel operating in the area. Safe zones are created by properly positioning emergency vehicles, utilizing barricades, cones, and/or flares, and wearing appropriate safety attire. R.O.A.D. Ready (Recognize, Observe, Assess, & Determine) can be used to help improve awareness of hazards and increase safety on or near roadways.

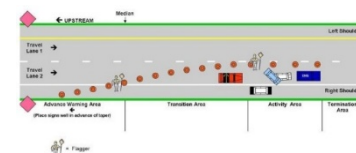
1

Vehicle Positioning: Proper positioning of emergency vehicles is key to establishing safe work zones. The largest and heaviest vehicles at the scene should be parked upstream and angled to divert traffic around the safe zone. The vehicle should be parked at a safe distance to allow smaller emergency vehicles that arrive later to park inside the safe area but close enough to keep traffic from reentering the safe zone after they pass.



2

Barriers, Cones, Flares: Traffic cones provide additional visibility and act as a guide to divert traffic. Flares should be used when there is a need to increase visibility. TXDOT should be notified of extended lane closures. TXDOT has resources to help with traffic control and to notify the public.



3

Wear Your Safety Vest: Emergency responders should always wear safety vests during traffic control and when responding to crash scenes for visibility. Low visibility is a serious hazard to any individual working near moving vehicles. Being visible in all lighting conditions and environments is critical.



4

Clear the Roadway: The likelihood of a secondary crash increases for each minute the primary incident continues to be a hazard, and responder lives remain at risk every minute they are on the collision scene. Investigation efficiency is important to clear the roadway as quickly and safely as possible.

LEARN MORE WITH THESE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [The Officer Down Memorial Page \(ODMP\)](#)
- Texas Police Chiefs Association's free VINCIBLE roll calls trainings: <https://texaspolicechiefs.org/vincible/>
- TML Risk Pool [Emergency Vehicle Operations in Texas T.I.P.S. Sheet](#)
- TML Risk Pool [High Visibility Apparel T.I.P.S. Sheet](#)