

Traffic Incident Management focus of new metro area campaign

Omaha, Nebraska— August 15, 2016 — The greater Omaha/Council Bluffs area responder community is kicking off a new campaign to highlight the importance of Traffic Incident Management and highway safety in the metro area. Approximately 40 area agencies and organizations have formed a collaborative to enhance their response to incidents on our area roadways in a planned and coordinated process.

For public safety responders and support teams responding to highway incidents, the risk of injury or death is constant. The National Traffic Incident Management Coalition (NTIMC) says traffic crashes and “struck-by” incidents are a leading cause of on-duty injuries and deaths for law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical services, and towing and recovery professionals. These “**heroes of the highway**” risk their personal safety to provide necessary services to the citizens of the Omaha/Council Bluffs metropolitan area. Safe, quick clearance of highway incidents reduces the exposure for all.

The U.S. Department of Transportation characterizes traffic congestion as “one of the single largest threats” to the Nation's economic prosperity and way of life. Traffic incidents are a large contributing factor to congestion in the United States. NTIMC studies indicate that traffic incidents cause about one quarter of the congestion on U.S. roadways, and that for every minute a freeway lane is blocked due to an incident, it results in four minutes of travel delay. Travel delay impacts system reliability, commerce, and on varying levels, the livability of the communities we call home. Saving lives, time and money, is a shared priority among local, state and federal partners.

The campaign kicks off with a brief celebration on Thursday, August 18th, at the Council Bluffs Interstate System Improvement Program Office located at the far east side of the Mall of the Bluffs, at approximately 11:30 a.m. News media and the public are invited to attend the brief presentation where Greg Youell, Metropolitan Area Planning Agency Executive Director, Andrew Wilson, Program Delivery Team Leader with the Federal Highway Administration, and Lt. John Sokolik, Omaha Police Department will speak about the benefits of collaborative Traffic Incident Management to both agencies and the public. The campaign will communicate with the public regularly about the goals of Traffic Incident Management, methods for additional information and resources, as well as helpful safety tips.

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For more information, news media only:

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