



MDOT Work Zone Crash Investigations Lack Follow Through, Audit Finds

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Michigan Department of Transportation reviews of crashes in work zones were found to be lacking in analysis and follow through, an Office of Auditor General report released today found.

[The audit](#) found that 73 percent of all fatal crashes in a work zone had no analysis conducted by the department. Of the 30 fatal crashes auditors looked at, eight stated something could have been done.

“Nothing in the audit findings suggested there is a lapse in safety standards for work zones, but various police agencies determined that the vast majority of crashes in work zones were caused by driver error,” MDOT spokesperson Jeff **CRANSON** said.

The audit also stated that notification of 80 percent of the fatal crashes to management took longer than the required 12-hour timeframe, though five claim they called the work zone management unit.

There were 21 of the 39 projects audited that didn’t have an employee designated to monitor crashes.

The audit stated that MDOT agreed their work zone manual could lead to the issues found in the audit, because of defining a project as “significant” and said they would be working with the Federal Highway Administration to review and update policies by September 2025, which would be implemented by March 2026.

The audit of the formal field review process also found that department auditors did not return to make sure any safety issues found in work zones were corrected 24 percent of the time.

The audit suggested that MDOT set up a field review process to identify and correct any potential issues impacting the safety in work zones.

“Those officials have already made changes and begun effort to improve the processes,” Cranson said.

The audit also found there was no transportation management plan for 53 percent of the “nonsignificant” projects and that management plans were not submitted for review in 60 percent of the significant projects.

“MDOT officials are pleased that the auditors worked hard to understand these complex processes. Employees at all road agencies strive for safe work zones. The objective of this audit was to see if MDOT officials were following processes they established,” Cranson said.