From March through November, the Iowa Department of Transportation may have up to 500 road construction work zones, and each of the department’s maintenance garages may establish one or more short-term work zones per day. Couple that with the work of cities and counties, and motorists can expect to see thousands of work zones during this period.

A work zone is defined as being from the first sign identifying the zone (typically a “Road Work Ahead” sign) to a sign indicating the end of the work zone (typically an “End Road Work” sign). Work zones may be either stationary or moving, depending on the work being done. These work zones require extra caution on the part of drivers, so they need to pay close attention to the movements of traffic around them, as well as the location of road workers whose jobs often put them extremely close to traffic.
There are three types of distractions:

- Manual – taking your hands off the wheel.
- Visual – taking your eyes off the road.
- Cognitive – taking your mind off the task of driving.

But, because text messaging requires visual, manual and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the most alarming distraction. The best way to end distracted driving is to educate all Americans about the danger it poses.

Key facts and statistics from www.distraction.gov

- In 2009, 5,474 people were killed in crashes involving driver distraction, and an estimated 448,000 were injured.
- 16 percent of fatal crashes in 2009 involved reports of distracted driving.
- 20 percent of injury crashes in 2009 involved reports of distracted driving.
- In the month of June 2011, more than 196 billion text messages were sent or received in the United States, up nearly 50 percent from June 2009.
- Teen drivers are more likely than other age groups to be involved in a fatal crash where distraction is reported. In 2009, 16 percent of teen drivers involved in a fatal crash were reported to have been distracted.
- 40 percent of all American teens say they have been in a car when the driver used a cell phone in a way that put people in danger.
- Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times more likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves.
- Text messaging creates a crash risk 23 times worse than driving while not distracted.
- Sending or receiving a text takes a driver’s eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent – at 55 mph – of driving the length of an entire football field, blind.
- Headset cell phone use is not substantially safer than hand-held use.
- Using a cell phone while driving – whether it’s hand-held or hands-free – delays a driver’s reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of 0.08 percent.
- Driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent.