Springfield woman dies in early morning crash

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

SPRINGFIELD, Ore. -- On the last day of the 2008 National Work Zone Awareness Week, a 26-year old Springfield woman died early Friday morning from injuries she suffered during a crash in a highway work zone located northbound Interstate 5 in the Springfield area. A 26-year old Springfield woman died about 3 a.m. Friday morning when she crashed in a construction zone. She was not wearing a seat belt, troopers said. - OSP photoAccording to Oregon State Police (OSP) Sgt. Ron Martin, about 3 a.m., April 11, a 2002 Dodge Neon four-door driven by 26-year old Springfield resident Willow Ann Christensen lost control while traveling north on Interstate 5 near milepost 194 while traveling through an active construction zone. The Dodge crossed out of control into the closed northbound left lane, knocking over multiple large orange traffic barriers, narrowly missing several construction workers, and collided into a flatbed trailer parked on the inside shoulder adjacent to the closed lane of travel. The car came to rest in the center median. Christensen was not wearing safety restraints and was ejected from the car. She was pronounced deceased at the scene. No construction workers were injured. OSP troopers from the Springfield Area Command are continuing the investigation into the cause of the crash. Troopers were assisted at the scene by ODOT, the Lane County Sheriff's Office, Springfield Fire Department, and the Lane County Medical Examiner's Office. The left northbound lane of Interstate 5 remained closed throughout the investigation. The 2008 National Work Zone Awareness Week runs April 7 â€“ 11 with the theme, "Slow Down for the Cone Zone". In a news release issued April 3rd ODOT emphasized orange cones on Oregon roads mean work zone ahead, and with that knowledge comes the reminder to motorists to SLOW DOWN, pay attention to work zone signing and watch for roadway workers. Released preliminary 2007 statistics in Oregon show an increase in fatalities over 2006, from five to 11. None of those who died were construction workers; all were either drivers or passengers in motor vehicles. For the past several years, ODOT has been educating drivers and encouraging safety in work zones by promoting the slogan, "Slow down. Better roads ahead." For more information and tips on safe driving, visit www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/workzonesafety.shtml. Tips for staying safe in the "Cone Zone" * Pay complete attention to driving. The most important thing drivers can do is focus on the driving task, especially in the transition zone before the work area. * Orange is your clue. Slow down when you see orange signs, barrels and barricades. Speeding is the second most common factor in work zone crashes. * Don't tailgate. Instead, double your following distance. * Move over to the correct lane well in advance of the work zone. * Leave early to reach your destination on time. You may experience delays in work zones â€” plan for them! * Be patient. Be courteous to other drivers so you all arrive safely. * Avoid work zones when you can by using an alternate route. You can learn about construction updates, road conditions, traffic and more by calling 5-1-1 or visiting www.TripCheck.com.