Michigan State University will use $231,000 from the Federal Highway Administration for the development of highway work zone safety guideline materials. The grant runs through 2021.

The MSU team, led by Timothy Gates, associate professor of civil and environmental engineering, includes:

- Mehrnaz Ghamami, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering;
- Dong Zhao, assistant professor from the Construction Management Program in the School of Planning, Design and Construction (SPDC);
- Ali Zockaie, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering; and
- A team of graduate students.

The five-year grant will develop materials to address several work zone safety operations issues and practices involving various worker groups and regions.

“I am excited to work with this interdisciplinary team of faculty and graduate students spanning across the College of Engineering and SPDC,” Gates said. “Each of the collaborators brings a different set of skills, experiences and perspectives to the project, which is exactly what the Federal Highway Administration likes to see. Michigan State is truly exceptional when it comes to fostering interdisciplinary collaborations between departments and colleges,” Gates added.
The team will investigate low-cost work zone management strategies and will work with state departments of transportation to obtain a consensus of “low-cost” countermeasures being used across the U.S. Some of the different facility types include high-speed rural interstates and two-way, two-lane highways. Short content modules and videos will be prepared to be integrated into existing training programs.

Zhao said the work zones represent a complex socio-technical system including humans, technology, management, and the environment.

“How to organize all these factors is a key to the project’s success,” Zhao added.

For more information about this project, contact Timothy Gates at gatestim@egr.msu.edu or Dong Zhao at dzhao@msu.edu.

Related Website: Story courtesy of MSU School of Planning, Design and Construction
Communications contact: Patricia Mroczek

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