Grieving Family Urges Motorists to Slow Down

An Illinois family suffering the loss of a father in a highway construction crash has issued a plea for drivers to slow down.

Henry Jefferson (Jeff) Heath, 58, of Godfrey, IL, died after being struck by a trailer. The trailer jackknifed after its driver braked hard to avoid slamming into a pick-up truck that had stopped in the work zone.

His daughter, Melissa Holtorf, said orange traffic cones and speed limits are there for a reason. “My kids don’t get to grow up with a grandpa because somebody wasn’t paying attention.”

Heath’s wife, Linda, said she had been worried about his safety because she has frequently observed inattentive drivers in work zones. Heath himself had spoken about drivers swerving and braking hard to avoid hitting him.

Illinois recently toughened penalties for drivers whose negligent actions kill workers in construction zones. The maximum penalty is 14 years’ jail and a $10,000 fine. No charges have been laid pending results of toxicology tests carried out on the driver whose trailer struck Heath.