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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Slow Down, Move Over**

September 15, 2020 – After a scary incident for the Dane County Sheriff's Office's "Beltline Bob" yesterday, we want to remind drivers to slow down and move over for emergency vehicles.

At approximately 1:40 pm on Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Eric Novotny, who works the first shift Freeway Service Truck position, was attempting to remove debris from the roadway, when the truck was hit by another vehicle. Deputy Novotny was traveling eastbound on the Beltline in the far right lane, near the Todd Drive exit. He was utilizing his emergency lights and the large digital sign on the service truck, to warn other drivers to slow down and move over. As Deputy Novotny exited the truck, a driver traveling behind him attempted go around him in the center lane and hit the driver-side door of the service truck. Deputy Novotny was forced to dive inside the truck to avoid being struck. He receive minor injuries and was treated by EMS at the scene.

Madison Police responded to the crash and cited the male driver. The Freeway Service Truck was inoperable had to be towed from the scene.

Wisconsin's Move Over Law was established to help safeguard law enforcement officers, emergency responders, road maintenance workers, and others who work on the side of highways, Wisconsin has a "Move Over Law" (Wis. Stat. s. 346.072).

The law requires drivers to shift lanes or slow down in order to provide a "safety zone" for a squad car, ambulance, fire truck, tow truck, utility vehicle, or highway maintenance vehicle that is stopped on the side of a road with its warning lights flashing.

Drivers have two options for creating a safety zone:

- If the road has more than one directional lane, like the Interstate, and you can switch lanes safely, you must move over to vacate the lane closest to the law enforcement or other vehicle with its lights flashing.
- If the road has a single directional lane or you can't safely move over, you must reduce your speed.

Failure of motorists to move over is one of the reasons that motor vehicle crashes kill more law enforcement officers on duty than any other cause.