

Put the Brakes on Distracted Driving!



Vehicle crashes are the number one cause of workplace death and distracted driving has become a persistent danger on our roads. In fact, half of drivers feel pressure from employers to drive distracted according to an NSC survey. While staying productive is important, distracted driving should never be considered a business necessity.

Distracted driving isn't just a danger to you, it puts everyone around you at risk, including other drivers, pedestrians, road workers and first responders. Follow these steps to avoid distractions and help keep you, your co-workers and everyone else near our roads safe.

- Schedule calls for times when you will not be driving.
- Avoid calling or texting your co-workers or clients when **(continued on page 2)**

April 15 thru 19 is Work Zone Safety Week



A total of 532 construction workers were killed at road construction sites from 2011 through 2016 – more than twice the combined total for all other industries combined – according to a recent report from the Center for Construction Research and Training, also known as CPWR.

About half of those fatalities resulted from workers being struck by vehicles or mobile equipment, the report states, and nearly three-fourths of the workers killed were employed in the highway, street and bridge subsector.

Other findings:

- The number of road construction worker deaths rose to 103 in 2016 from a period-low 72 in 2013 – a 43 percent increase.
- Workers operating as crossing guards had the highest fatality rate, at 40.9 per 100,000.
- The months with the most fatal incidents were October (12.8 percent) and June (12.2 percent).
- 1,269 road construction worker deaths occurred at construction sites from 2003 through 2016. This accounted for about 9 percent of all construction fatalities each year.

The report highlights injury prevention strategies for road construction sites from CPWR and several agencies, including OSHA, NIOSH and the Federal Highway Administration. Proposed ideas include increasing visibility of workers and signage, creating positive barriers between workers and traffic, using warning systems for drivers and workers, enforcing speed reduction, and using engineering controls such as closing roads or rerouting traffic when possible.

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(continued from page 1) you know they are driving.

- Plan your workday with regular breaks when you can make calls and send texts or emails, so you aren't tempted to do so behind the wheel.
- Change your voicemail greeting to something like: "Hi, you've reached (insert name), I'm either away from my phone or I'm driving but please leave me a message."
- When necessary, let co-workers and clients know when you'll be driving and when you'll be available, so they know when to expect to hear from you.
- If you are in a vehicle with a distracted driver, whether it's a co-worker or a cab driver, speak up for your safety and hold each other accountable.
- If you need to check something behind the wheel, always pull over safely first - for professional drivers, this includes dispatching devices and mobile data terminals.
- Set your phone to Do Not Disturb or silence your notifications and store it in the glove box to avoid distractions.
- Program your GPS and start your music, podcast or audiobook while the vehicle is safely parked.

Remember, hands-free devices don't make you safer – while they allow for one more hand to be placed on the steering wheel, they do not reduce the distraction to the brain. The message is a simple one, when you are behind the wheel, [Just Drive](#)

Distracted driving

At least eight people a day are killed in distraction-affected crashes. Many employers have enacted cell phone driving policies, but cell phones aren't the only source of distractions on the road: calls, texts, vehicle touchscreens, food and even other passengers can create dangerous distractions. Employers should adopt a strong distracted driving policy asking employees to:

- Program/start GPS equipment, music or podcasts while the vehicle is safely parked.
- Set cell phones to Do Not Disturb and/or silence notifications while driving.
- Inform clients, associates and business partners that calls will be returned when employees are not driving.
- Pull over safely and park before taking calls, sending texts/emails, or adjusting GPS/music/podcasts.

Many people drive distracted even when they know about the risks. This can sometimes be due to

pressure to respond or remain productive even while driving. A strong distracted driving policy sets the expectation that when employees are behind the wheel, their only job is to drive.

Many Drivers Engage in Potentially Deadly Behaviors Despite Dangers: Survey.

Roughly 3 out of 5 U.S. drivers admit they've engaged in unsafe behaviors behind the wheel, results of a recent survey show.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety surveyed nearly 2,500 licensed drivers about their driving behaviors and attitudes. The nonprofit used the findings to classify six types of drivers, with 41.2% qualifying as "safe" – meaning they rarely "engaged in any risky driving behavior."

The drivers who said they predominantly engaged in speeding (22.7%) represented the next largest category, followed by distracted and aggressive drivers (17.3%), distracted drivers (15%), and impaired drivers (1.3%). People who reported engaging in each of the risky behaviors in question were categorized as the "most dangerous drivers" and accounted for 2.4% of all the respondents. Twenty-seven percent said they've sent a text or email while driving, while 59% indicated they had used hands-free technology while behind the wheel.

Results show a similar ethic within other categories, as the drivers proceeded with their risky behavior despite knowing it was unsafe and/or illegal.

However, "fewer drivers perceive speeding as dangerous, and speeding behaviors have the lowest perceived social disapproval of all the examined unsafe driving behaviors," the survey states.

"Despite acknowledging the dangers, some drivers continue to engage in potentially deadly behaviors, particularly speeding," David Yang, executive director of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, said in a press release. "Understanding the different types of risky driving behaviors and the characteristics of drivers who engage in them is crucial for developing targeted interventions to achieve safe mobility."

Notes From the Editor

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