

SAFETY ALERT

TRUCK DRIVERS – Distracted Driving

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We can't truly multi-task. Our brains juggle tasks, performing only one task at a time. We screen out information to deal with distraction overload which leads to "Inattention blindness." This is a big risk: we look but don't always see crucial things when we are distracted while driving. Sometimes the results are not too severe: we miss an exit, run a red light or stop sign, miss an important sign or even forgetting where you are going. Unfortunately, this behavior can have deadly results; crashes are highly likely, resulting in thousands of unnecessary injuries and deaths.

Background: The "National Safety Council" tracks vehicle crashes across our great Nation and has released some staggering facts:

- 1.6 million crashes per year can be attributed to cell phone talking and texting while driving.
- Every time you text and drive, you are 26 times more likely to be involved in a serious crash, which includes; reaching for device, dialing & talking and listening.
- Having your eyes off the road an average of 4-6 seconds when driving and texting is like having your eyes closed the equivalent length of a football field.
- 1 in 5 drivers confessed to surfing the web while driving, this includes Twitter, Facebook & GPS.
- Inexperienced drivers tend to speed and follow the vehicle in front of them too closely. This is a dangerous mix, especially when distracted by texting and driving.
- About 6 times more likely to cause an accident than driving intoxicated.
- The same as driving after 4 beers.
- Takes place by 800,000 drivers at any given time across the country.
- Slows your brake reaction speed by 18%.

Employers must make their employees aware of the dangers of distracted driving. Driving requires your full attention. There are 3 forms of distraction:

- Manual / Physical (hands leaving the steering wheel)
- Visual (eyes off the road)
- Cognitive (mind off the road)

Be aware- Texting involves all three of these distractions. **DO NOT TEXT AND DRIVE!!!!**

Truck drivers are the most unsupervised employee in a workforce. Know the laws in your state and have a company "cell phone use policy" in place. Where policies allow, Bluetooth is the only recommended device if talking is necessary. Step up and protect your employees and your property.

- Provide safety rules, review policies and laws
- Relay your company expectation's - this is the most important communication you can have to protect your employee's, company's assets and reputation
- Do not allow a truck driver to hit the road without this knowledge. By the way, your company's name on the truck should concern you enough to make sure you have the right truck driver driving your truck, you get what you accept.

For additional information on Distracted Driving, visit their website at www.nsc.org Safety on the Road – Distracted Driving.

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