



Safety Facts

Below are a number of facts about the safety movement, safety in the workplace and at home, as well as safe driving milestones and facts. This document is meant to serve as a resource for you as you plan safety programs and work to communicate about safety and the importance of safety procedures to your colleagues. For additional information, please visit the National Safety Council website (www.nsc.org).

General Safety Milestones and Facts

- The safety movement has saved nearly 6 million lives over the past 100 years.
- The American Museum of Safety, opened in New York in 1911, exhibited safety devices and evidence of the need for improved safety techniques.
- In 1912, the First Cooperative Safety Congress, a small group of industrial leaders from the Midwest, met to discuss American workers' safety. The outcome of their gathering was a decision to form a permanent body devoted to the promotion of safety in U.S. industry.
- In 1913, one year after the First Cooperative Safety Congress, a second Safety Congress was held in Chicago with 200 people in attendance. Here, the delegates created the National Council on Industrial Safety, which was to be a clearinghouse of safety information.
- In 1914 the name of the National Council on Industrial Safety was changed to the National Safety Council to reflect a broader focus, including traffic safety and other non-industrial safety issues.
- Baltimore was the first American city to install streetlights, in 1817.
- President Franklin D. Roosevelt understood the important need for safety and accident prevention in the United States. In 1941, he called for the nation to mobilize its resources in a campaign for accident prevention.
- The first disposable latex medical gloves were manufactured in 1964.
- The Emergency Care Training program launched in 1990. Since then, over 8 million people have been trained in first aid and CPR.

Safe Driving Milestones and Facts

- In 1757, Boston passed an ordinance against speeding. Drivers were not permitted to travel faster than a foot pace.
- The first one-way streets in the U.S. were established in New York City.
- The first turnpike was begun between Philadelphia and Lancaster, PA in 1793. It was 62 miles long.
- The first car accident in the U.S. occurred in 1896.
- The first recorded traffic death in the U.S. occurred in New York City in 1889 when Wall Street real estate dealer Henry H. Bliss stepped off a trolley car at 74th Street and Central Park West. He had turned around to help a lady down the steps when he was struck and run over by an electric automobile passing the trolley.
- In 1896, the first recorded sale of an automobile in the U.S. occurred. Built by Charles and Frank Duryea, the gasoline-powered vehicle was purchased by a Massachusetts man. The Duryea brothers continued making automobiles into the early 1900s.
- President William McKinley was the first U.S. president to ride in an automobile. It was a Stanley Steamer.



- In 1903, Mary Anderson of Birmingham, Alabama patented a “window-cleaning device.” Her invention was an arm that removed snow, rain and sleet from the windows of electric motor cars. The arm was manually operated inside the car by means of a handle. Hand-operated windshield wipers appeared as standard equipment in some cars beginning in 1916, but wipers remained optional equipment for most manufactured vehicles into the 1930s.
- 1907 marked a year of significant improvements to motor vehicles. It was in that year that the first seat belt was offered in a Thomas Flyer. In the same year, a blacksmith attached a crude iron bar – or bumper – to a 1907 Oakland.
- In 1908, Rhode Island was the first state to enact a driver licensing law.
- In 1910, New York State enacted a motor vehicle bill that required annual registration and licensing of chauffeurs and lighting at night. State speed limits were set at 30 mph in the country and 15 mph in the cities. Fees and fines were designated to support road maintenance.
- The first electric traffic signal was installed in Cleveland in 1914.
- The Uniform Vehicle Code was established in 1924 as a result of the National Conference on Street and Highway Safety. This code serves as a model for traffic laws in all states.
- The first formal high school driver education course, including road instruction, took place in Gilbert, Minnesota in 1923.
- Two-filament headlamps for direct and diverted lighting appeared on some cars in 1924, and front and rear bumpers became standard in 1925.
- In 1937, the National Safety Council produced its first safe driving video. It was titled “With Care” and focused on safe truck and bus driving.
- The first traffic safety advertising campaign took place in 1945.
- Based on studies from Accident Facts – now called Injury Facts -- on the cause of motor vehicle deaths on U.S. highways, Chris Imhoff drafted a driver safety program called the Driver Improvement Program. The program would later become the Defensive Driving Course (DDC). The DDC program expanded across the country and the globe, and has reached hundreds of thousands of drivers.
- The first “Buckle Up” seatbelt campaign was established in 1981.
- During its first two years, the Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety campaign reduced car accident-related child deaths by 94 percent.
- Approximately 24 percent of all motor vehicle crashes involve the use of a cell phone.
- Put the phone down. Texting while driving increases a drivers’ risk of crashing by between 8 to 23 times.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among teens. Talk to your child about the importance of safe driving habits.
- Per mile driven drivers between the ages of 15 and 20 are involved in fatal crashes at more than twice the rate of the rest of the population. Learn how to protect teen drivers [here](#).
- Staying cool in the summer and [warm in the winter](#) is critical when job requirements take employees outdoors. Check out our website for tips on how to stay safe.



Workplace Safety Milestones and Facts

- Wisconsin was the first state to adopt a worker's compensation program.
- Unintentional, off-the-job injuries cost at least \$887 per U.S. worker.
- 9 out of 10 deaths occur off the job.
- In 2010, employers lost more than 240 million days of production time due to off-the-job injuries.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, seven worker fatalities and more than 2,900 injuries were recorded in the marine cargo handling industry in 2010. As a result, OSHA issued a revised directive in 2012 regarding enforcement guidance for inspections on longshoring and marine terminals.
- Wood dust exposure can be hazardous to workers, causing health effects ranging from allergic symptoms to cancer, according to a [video](#) from the Institute for Safety and Health Management.
- Motor vehicle crashes cost employers \$60 billion annually in medical care, legal expenses, property damage and lost productivity. They also drive up the cost of workers' compensation, Social Security, private health and disability insurance. In addition, they increase the company overhead involved in administering these programs.
- The average motor vehicle crash costs an employer \$16,500. When a worker has an on-the-job crash that results in an injury, the cost to their employer is approximately \$74,000. When a fatality is involved, costs can exceed \$500,000.
- Back injuries are the most common type of injury in the workplace, resulting in approximately 195,000 cases involving days away from work in 2009. Over half of these injuries are from lifting. Get tips on how to prevent these injuries [here](#).
- The right equipment can protect your eyes against irritation and injury on the job. Learn more [here](#).
- An estimated 34.1 million adults have lifetime asthma. It is one of the leading causes of absenteeism due to chronic illnesses. Learn how to prevent asthma and avoid asthma episodes [here](#).

Home/Out-of-Work Safety Milestones and Facts

- About 1 out of 10 people experience an unintentional injury in the home or in a community venue, and about 1 in 3,500 people die from such injuries.
- Nine out of ten deaths and about 70% of the medically consulted injuries suffered by workers happened when they were away from work and off-the-job.
- For every one workplace injury, there are three injuries that occur off the job. The two leading causes of unintentional deaths in the home and community include unintentional drug overdose for people 15 to 64 years old; and falls for people 65+ years old. Learn how to address and prevent these situations [here](#).
- Overloaded backpacks used by children have received a lot of attention from parents, doctors, school administrators and the media in the past several years. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates there are more than 7,300 backpack-related injuries annually treated by hospitals and doctors. Injuries include bruises, sprains and strains to the back and shoulder and fractures.. A child's backpack should weigh no more than approximately 10 to 20 percent of the child's bodyweight, depending on the child's body strength and fitness. Learn how to prevent backpack-related injury [here](#).



- Each year, more than 200,000 children visit hospital emergency rooms because of playground injuries. Nearly 80 percent of playground injuries are caused by falls to the ground. Learn how to keep children safe on the playground [here](#). If you're setting up your own children's swing set, be sure to review [our tips](#).
- As many as two-thirds of inline skaters do not wear appropriate safety gear. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, 16,701 inline skating injuries occurred in 2010. Read our inline skating safety tips [here](#).
- The highest categories contributing to eye injuries are related to household, workplace and sports. Click [here](#) to learn how to protect your eyes from injury.
- An estimated 73 to 85 million Americans ride bikes each year. According to Injury Facts 2012, approximately 800 bicyclists were killed and more than 540,000 visited the emergency room with injuries.. Follow [our tips](#) for safe and enjoyable bicycling.
- According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in 2010, there were 130,627 skateboard injuries with 46 percent involving children younger than 15 years old. Learn how to skateboard safely [here](#).
- In 2010, drowning claimed the lives of an estimated 3,600 people. Although all age groups are represented, children four years old and younger have the highest death rate due to drowning, representing nearly 14 percent. Most drowning and near-drowning incidents happen when a child falls into a pool or is left alone in the bathtub. Click [here](#) to learn more about water safety.
- While summer means picnics, barbecues and fireworks displays, it can also bring about an increase in injuries. In 2010, an estimated 8,600 people were treated in emergency rooms for fireworks-related injuries, 39 percent of whom were under 15 years old. Review [our tips](#) to ensure you have a safe and fun summer.
- Sliding downhill is an exhilarating winter sport. But sledding unintentional injuries are surprisingly common despite snow's cushioning effect. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that the number of tobogganing and sledding injuries is 35,273 in 2010. Learn how to sled safely with [these tips](#).