



A Campaign on Safer Driving With Technology

Why Employers Will Want to Apply Brakes on Distracted Driving

Scary numbers, crazy amounts of money: 468 deaths, \$21 million.

How serious is the issue of distracted driving in the state of Texas? In 2014, there were 100,825 traffic crashes statewide that involved distracted driving (distraction, driver inattention or cell-phone use), [according to the Texas Department of Transportation](#). Those crashes resulted in 468 deaths and 3,214 serious injuries.

Nearly as alarming, the number of distracted driving crashes jumped 6% from 2013. [What can you – the employer – do](#) to protect your company’s bottom line and liability? To prevent a catastrophic loss?

Many are aware a Corpus Christi, Texas jury awarded \$21 million to a woman injured when her car was broadsided by a station wagon driven by a Coca-Cola marketing employee talking on her cell phone in 2012, that figure reported in an article posted on Automotive-Fleet.com. Some employers have acted to prohibit cell-phone use while driving and recognized hand-free devices are just as dangerous.

What else is being done to combat the problem?

Well, campaigns aimed at curbing driver cell-phone use and stopping distracted driving are gaining momentum across the country. Likewise, TxDOT is highlighting the dangers associated with texting and driving through its “Talk. Text. Crash-Distracted Driving” program.

Perhaps you’ve seen these TxDOT signs posted on message boards along the highways: “Drive Now. Talk or Text Later.” And, [“You Talk. You Text. You Crash.”](#) Or maybe you’ve seen TxDOT public service announcements, window clings and logos, all created with one idea in mind, to encourage people to join in the effort to stop distracted driving.

Arm Yourself with Tools, Resources, Information

- Use this free National Safety Council [Cell Phone Policy Assessment Tool](#) to see how your company’s policy compares to recommended best practices. The tool is quick, easy and online. And it’s free.
- Encourage your employees to put the phone down when they are driving – in the event of an incident, this often spells the difference between life and death. Ask, are you willing to [pledge to drive cell-free](#)?



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- Put the brakes on employees' distracted driving. The [National Safety Council reports the average cost of a work-related motor vehicle injury](#) claim is about \$69,000.
- Scare the pants off members of your workforce by showing this video: [Truck Driver Texting While Driving Caught on Tape](#). Follow-up with a Q&A period. Ask: What are your thoughts? What do you see people doing while they drive that is a "distraction"? Do you say anything when you are a passenger in a car where the driver is doing something that is distracting him/her from paying attention to what is on the road?