Occupational Driving Safety Programs: The Driver

Karen Puckett
Director, Workplace Safety

Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers’ Compensation (DWC)
Driving in Texas

- No deathless days in 2014
- 3,534 people died

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People killed in crashes involving distracted driving</td>
<td>483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of people who died in vehicles not wearing restraints</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of motorcyclists who died were not wearing helmets</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People killed in DUI crashes</td>
<td>1,041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)*
Objectives

• Understand why employers should focus on transportation safety

• Understand employer considerations when formulating an effective driving safety program:

• Learn about available resources to help establish and assess driving safety programs
Focus on Transportation

• Transportation related incidents are the leading cause of fatal work injuries

• A variety of industries and occupations require employees to drive or be exposed to hazards associated with driving

• Roadways and work zones are likely the most dangerous part of their work environment
The Statistics

- 45% of all fatal occupational injuries in Texas involved transportation incidents (237 out of 524) in 2014.

### Occupational Deaths

- **55%**: All Other Causes
- **45%**: Transportation
The Statistics

• 57% of the transportation incidents involved occupations other than motor vehicle operators

• An estimated 3,980 non-fatal transportation incidents involved days away from work
Employers Limiting Their Risk

• DWC encourages employers to:
  – Implement effective accident prevention plans that address driving and vehicular hazards
  – Implement and enforce written safety programs and policies for working in and around motor vehicles
  – Review and improve the occupational driving safety program on an annual basis or whenever changes occur
Employer Considerations

• The Roadway Workplace
  – Consider the vehicle and road as part of the workplace

• The Driver
  – Recognize that driver behavior, skills, and physical conditions affect driving

• The Vehicle
  – Ensure proper vehicle maintenance and operations

• The Environment
  – Acknowledge that conditions outside the vehicle affect travel
Distracted Driving
Seat Belt Use
Impaired Driving
Fatigue
Wellness/Fit to Drive
Driving Training

THE DRIVER
Distracted Driving

• Alert and focused drivers are critical in preventing motor vehicle collisions

• Any activity besides driving is considered a distraction

• Employers should be aware of and incorporate local jurisdictional laws
Distracted Driving (cont.)

- Distractions include (but are not limited to):
  - Use of electronic mobile devices for calling, texting, or watching
  - Eating
  - Drinking
  - Smoking
  - Reading
  - Applying makeup or other grooming activities
  - Reaching for items
  - Focusing on other passengers
Seat Belt Use

• Every employee in a motorized vehicle should wear proper restraint

• In 2014, TxDOT reported 2,587 crashes occurred in Texas where unrestrained vehicle occupants sustained fatal or serious injuries

• Wearing a seat belt helps avoid occupant ejections in a crash; increases chances of surviving by 45% in cars and by 60% in trucks
Impaired Driving

• Driving skills can be affected by:
  – Alcohol
  – Illegal drugs
  – Prescription drugs
  – Over-the-counter medications

• Employers should consider drug and alcohol testing for all employees who drive
Fatigue

- Fatigued driving can be as dangerous as impaired driving
- Reaction times are diminished and drivers can fall asleep quickly
- Avoid unnecessary travel or make alternate arrangements
Fatigue

• *Employers* should consider effects of working long shifts or evening/night shifts when making driving assignments

• *Employees* should understand the importance of getting enough restful sleep
Wellness/Fitness to Drive

• While some driver licenses require medical assessments, any employee operating a motor vehicle should be able to perform the task effectively.

• The abilities to see, hear, react, and maneuver are important for safe driving.
Driver Training

• Train employees driving on the job in all aspects of the company’s driving program

• Training should explain risks of driving and that the vehicle and roadways are considered part of the workplace
Driver Training (cont.)

• Minimum training recommendations:
  – Employer’s driving policies
  – Seat belt use
  – Distracted driving
  – Impaired driving
  – Fatigued/fit driving
  – Operating and maneuvering the type of vehicle they will be driving
  – Sharing the road
  – Aggressive driving
  – Defensive driving
  – Avoiding rear-end collisions
  – Avoiding backing and related collisions
  – Driving in adverse weather and road conditions
  – Vehicle maintenance
Assess Your Plan

• Occupational Driving Safety Program Review Checklist
DWC Resources

• Occupational Driving Safety Programs

• Workplace Safety Programs and Services
  • [www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/index.html](http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/index.html)
    – (512) 804-4610
    – safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov
Next Webinar in this Series

• Occupational Driving Safety Programs: The Vehicle and The Environment
  – Ensure proper vehicle maintenance and operations
  – Acknowledge that conditions outside the vehicle affect travel

• November 5, 2015
• 10:00 am
Questions?