

Drive Employees...

**TO A COMPANY-WIDE TRAFFIC SAFETY POLICY:
NO MORE DISTRACTED DRIVING**



DISTRACTED DRIVING FACTS

FOCUS ON DISTRACTED DRIVING

According to a Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI) study, nearly 80 percent of crashes are caused by drivers who are distracted. Multi-tasking has its place, but not on the road.

- Motor vehicle crashes are the #1 cause of work-related fatalities. The emotional cost of losing an employee in a crash is incalculable, but there are also hard costs associated with hiring a replacement.
- Employees injured in traffic crashes will undoubtedly lose productivity. If they're out of work for an extended period of time, you'll also have to pay to hire or train a substitute.
- Employers are increasingly being sued for liability when an employee causes a crash while making business-related phone calls behind the wheel.

DIAL DOWN THE RISKS

- A recent national survey found that roughly three of every four motorists say they talk on the phone in their cars, and another one in five admits to texting behind the wheel.
- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 11 percent of drivers are using cell phones at any one time.
- Drivers will look directly at objects around them but are less likely to remember what they've seen when they're talking on the phone.
- While a growing number of drivers are turning to hands-free devices, many studies have concluded that hands-free cell phones aren't any safer to use while driving than hand-held devices. It's the conversation rather than holding a phone that brings special risks.

THE PROBLEM

Researchers observing more than 1,700 drivers found that three out of every four drivers using a cell phone committed a traffic violation. Talking on a cell phone while driving makes you four times more likely to crash, and texting while driving increases your chances of a crash by 23 times! NHTSA reports that employers in Texas spend \$4.3 billion every year as a result of on- and off-the-job traffic injuries. Crashes that happen when employees are off the clock are responsible for 80 to 90 percent of your company's crash-related benefit and health care costs. Multi-tasking in the car may seem like a time-saving solution, but it isn't worth the risk.

MAKE DISTRACTION-FREE DRIVING A COMPANY POLICY

Any type of distraction while driving is dangerous, whether it is talking on the phone, texting, checking email, eating or looking for something inside the vehicle. Anything that takes your mind off the road will make you slower to brake, less likely to see important signs and more likely to crash. Crashes often result from simply



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looking away from the road for several seconds. Keep your employees safer with a company policy that insists upon distraction-free driving for all employees in all vehicles. See the sample policy on the CD, and feel free to use it as the starting point for developing your company's position on distraction-free driving. Your policy should clearly state that:

- Employees are not permitted to use cell phones or PDAs, either hand-held or hands-free, while they are driving.
- Employees are not allowed to make or answer calls while driving. Incoming calls must be directed to voice mail.
- Employees are not allowed to read or respond to texts and emails while driving.
- If it is necessary for an employee to make an emergency call, the employee must park the vehicle in a safe location before making the call.
- Consequences for not following the company's distraction-free driving policy also should be spelled out.

WHAT TO DO

Follow these three simple steps to enact a company-wide distraction-free driving policy:

1. First, educate your staff about the risks associated with cell phones and driving. Use the materials included on this CD, including fact sheets and tips.
2. Second, develop your written distraction-free driving policy, get it approved by company decision-makers and attorneys, distribute it to employees and have them return it to you or their supervisor, dated and signed. File it in their personnel file. If applicable, work with your Human Resources manager to determine how to reward employees for following the policy or penalize them for violating it—including dismissal.
3. Third, routinely promote distraction-free driving: display reminders in break rooms or on public bulletin boards at your place of business, or consider using your company's email or Intranet. Take advantage of no-cost opportunities like these to encourage your employees to always hang up the phone while they're driving!



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