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November 2013

Texans can help make the holidays merry and bright all season long by giving the gift of a sober drive home. Remember, it's the most wonderful time of the year, but one poor decision to drink and drive could bring a devastating end to holiday celebrations.



During last year's Holiday season (Dec. 1 2011, through Jan. 1, 2012) there were 2,462 alcohol-related traffic crashes in Texas, resulting in 842 serious injuries and 78 fatalities. (TxDOT 2012)

[National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month](#)

December (All Month)

[Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over. National Crackdown](#)

December 13, 2013 - January 1, 2014

[The 9th Annual Texas Transportation Forum](#)

January 6-8, 2014

[TSCE in Galveston](#)

March 30 - April 1, 2014

New NSC's Our Driving Concern: Texas Employer 2014 Traffic Safety Award

The National Safety Council's Our Driving Concern (ODC): Texas Employers Program will honor Texas employers through a new awards recognition program. Traffic Safety awards will be presented to Texas businesses that encourage driver behaviors among employees on-and-off the job.

Eligibility: Any Texas business is eligible to submit an application. Companies may nominate or self-nominate. Companies may be municipal, corporate, private, or not-for-profit, small or large.

Applications can be found on the [ODC website](#).

Recent Articles

[Employer Ban Is Key to Ending Distracted Driving](#)

by David Teeter, NSC

Cellphone distracted driving is a public safety epidemic. The National Safety Council estimates cellphone use is involved in 25 percent of all crashes in this country. Cellphone distracted driving also is a multifaceted problem. Employers play a key role in ending one of the biggest threats on our roadways today. Through cellphone distracted driving policies, employers can both protect their employees while reducing their liability risk.

Implementing organization-wide cellphone policies that completely ban cellphone use -- handheld and hands-free -- and cover all employees is an effective way to reduce car crashes, which are the leading cause of workplace fatalities. Employees are an organization's greatest asset, and employers have an obligation to protect them.

[Distracted Driving Costs Employers Millions in Liability Cases](#)

The cost of distracted driving crashes is high - not just in lives, but in the millions of dollars paid out by drivers' employers in liability cases. The physical dangers of distracted driving have been well documented, but employer liability is not as widely publicized. The National Safety Council on Wednesday released [a report](#) urging employers to ban cell phone use while driving on company time or with company-issued cell phones or vehicles.

Judgements

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A very small sampling of judgments against employers for distracted driving accidents caused by their employees:

- A jury recently awarded a \$21 million judgment against Coca Cola to a victim of an auto accident who was hit by the driver of a delivery truck who was distracted while talking on the phone.
- A 2009 accident caused by a truck driver checking for text messages resulted in a judgment against his employer for \$18 million.
- And in 2005, an accident caused by an employee checking voicemail while driving resulted in a \$5 million judgment against his employer.

Distracted driving can not only have devastating consequences for the people who get into an accident, but also for your business.

Our Driving Concern Training

Our Driving Concern is offering **FREE** trainings for employers to provide necessary traffic safety information to keep employees safe on Texas roads. Training sessions will take place throughout the state, and we can even come to your workplace to host a training for a group of employees.

We are setting up training dates from October 2013 through September 2014, looking for locations to host these events. Would your company be willing to

RSVP today for one of our free trainings or schedule your own by contacting [Robinson](#), CFLE, at (512) 466-7383.

Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving has become a serious problem on our roadways. What is aggressive driving? Most of us know it when we see it, but NHTSA, after discussing with law enforcement and the judiciary, defines aggressive driving as occurring "when an individual commits a combination of moving traffic offenses so as to endanger other persons or property."

[Are you an aggressive driver?](#)

Face of Drunk Driving

At a recent ODC Train-the-Trainer the Jacqueline Saburido story was discussed and attendees asked for the link to locate these resources. TxDOT Faces of Drunk Driving website has a lot of resources employers can incorporate into their safety campaign.

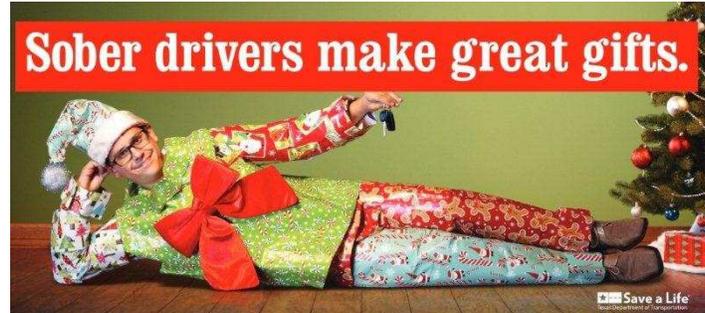
Drunk driving can have serious consequences, far beyond the legal and financial ones. Thousands of lives are permanently impacted each year because of someone's decision to get behind the wheel while impaired from the effects of alcohol.

The Faces of Drunk Driving public education campaign and website highlight the extensive human toll that drinking and driving can have and provides personal accounts from victims, families and others whose lives have been shattered. As one observer points out, none of it had to happen.

For their compelling stories and to learn how you can help prevent more tragedy from drunk driving, visit [Faces of Drunk Driving](#)

Holiday Don't Drink and Drive **TxDOT Campaign**

The daily death toll from drunk driving crashes during the Christmas and New Year holiday period is significantly higher than during the rest of the year. On average more than 2,400 alcohol-related traffic crashes occur on Texas roads and highways in December, resulting in 89 fatalities. (Estimates are based on an analysis of crash data since 2003.)



Plan Ahead When Planning Your Company Party

Too often a designated driver is chosen during the evening and is the "least" person in the group. Also, in many of our Texas towns and cities, mass transit taxi availability is limited. Supervisors need to talk to employees and plan ahead whether this is a full company-wide party or a department party hosted by the supervisor of that department. Realize the risks and liability and plan ahead for designated drivers.

Employer Liability

Employer liability is a growing concern and source of financial as well as legal issues for Texas employers. [Click here](#) to see what you can do regarding instituting corporate policies and ensuring your employees adhere to laws and regulations.

Resources

[Texas Driving Concern](#)

[TxDOT Traffic Safety](#)

[Current information regarding Texas traffic laws.](#)

[The Economic Impact of Crashes on Employers](#)

[The Great Multitasking Lie](#)

[National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#)

[Distracted Driving Facts](#)

[Distraction.gov](#)

[National Safety Council](#)

[National Transportation Safety Board](#)

[Texas Transportation Institute](#)

[U.S. Department of Transportation](#)

[Texas Department of Insurance](#)

[Safe Hand Texas](#)

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Need resources (posters, handouts, etc. to give out? Let me know as I have resources I can send to you to use! Send an email to me at lisa.robinson@nsc.org with your complete mailing address and I will ship you some!

Our Driving Concern Monthly Newsletter

Our Driving Concern is a monthly e-newsletter from the Texas Employer Traffic Safety Program, a landmark driving initiative funded by a grant from the Texas Department of Transportation. This initiative is building a statewide network of employer involvement in crash prevention for employees both on and off the

Because you care about your employees and their families, and keeping employees safe means keeping your business healthy, this e-newsletter provides you with safety resources from across the state. Visit us at txdrivingconcern.org.

Please send safety comments, experiences, stories or questions to:

[Lisa Robinson](#), CFLE

Program Manager, Texas Employer Traffic Safety Program
(512) 466-7383

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