

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Seven Safe Driving Practices Employees

Must Know



Every 12 minutes someone dies in a motor vehicle crash: Every 10 seconds an injury occurs: Every 5 seconds a crash occurs. Many of these incidents happen during the regular workday and while commuting from home to work. Employees bear the cost of all jobs directly related to on the job accidents and some off the job as well.

Increased traffic and congestion on our country's highways waste significant amounts of time and money in the form of productivity on the farm and also promotes risky driving behavior.

We must continually educate ourselves and new employees about the dangers that are lurking out there. In a second, they can cause us physical harm.

EMPLOYERS SHOULD-

- Keep roadways and parking areas clean and free of debris and well lighted.
- Install signs in the parking lots, warning employees for the need to "buckle up for safety" and to drive carefully.

Employers have the power to protect their businesses by educating their employees about safe driving practices. Below are some practices that we should put into effect to enhance employees' awareness of their safe driving habits:

- **TRANSPORT MATERIALS SECURELY-** This should be a "no-brainer," but surprisingly enough, we see it all the time where tools and equipment are being moved and aren't tied down securely. Loose objects can slide around and become airborne missiles, causing harm and injury to the vehicle and its passengers or other vehicles or passengers.
- **USE SEAT BELTS-** Seat belts are the single most effective means of reducing deaths and serious injuries in traffic accidents. Seat belts have proven to save approximately 12,000 lives each year and prevent 325,000 serious injuries in the USA. Non-users of the seat belt can expect to be thrown against the steering wheel, bounced around the inside of the vehicle, ejected to or through the windshield, or totally ejected from the vehicle.
- **DON'T DRIVE DISTRACTED-** 25 to 30% of all traffic accidents are caused by distracted driving. Busy schedules and roadway delays make it almost impossible to have much quality time at home. The more time we spend on the road, the less time we have at home. This should behoove us to try to watch and drive more carefully.

- **DON'T DRIVE WHILE IMPIRED WITH ALCOHOL-** Alcohol is used in 40% of all fatal motor vehicle crashes. This equates to one alcohol-related accident every 30 minutes of driving time. Alcohol, some prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and illegal drugs can all affect a person's ability to drive safely. It can cause decreased alertness, concentration, coordination, and reaction time. Alcohol is a contributing factor in 39% of all work-related vehicle crashes.
- **DON'T DRIVE AGGRESSIVELY-** Heavy traffic while commuting to and from work can get very frustrating and nerve racking. Delays and bottlenecks cause one to be late for work, reducing that day's productivity, and lend us to think of the time we are wasting. Aggressive driving usually entails tailgating, excessive speeding, failing to signal on a lane change, running a red light, or passing on the right side. Any or all of these acts can result in a sometimes-serious accident. If we are faced with one of these problems, we should not react; but rather allow the driver to merge in the lane.
- **DON'T DRIVE WHEN TIRED-** Fatigued or drowsy driving may be involved in more than 100,000 crashes each year, resulting in 40,000 injuries and 1,550 deaths. Actually, these figures represent only a tip of the iceberg since these crashes are seriously under-reported. It is imperative these days that we are well rested, sober, alert, and cognizant of the road so that we defend ourselves against those who aren't prepared.
- **TRAIN YOUNG DRIVERS** – The 16 to 20 year olds represent a significant highway safety problem. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of fatalities for teens. Historically, this group is the age group that has the lowest seat belt use rate and is the most likely to engage in risky driving behaviors that include alcohol, speeding, drug-impaired, and when drowsy. It is most important for employers with young drivers to actively promote safe driving practices.

Motor vehicle crashes cost employers \$60 billion annually in medical care, legal expenses, property damage, and lost productivity.

They drive up the costs of benefits, such as worker's compensation, Social Security, and health insurance. This is all the more important that employers know the seven safety issues above and preach it daily to their employees.

**LET'S TURN OUR ATTENTION
TO ACCIDENT PREVENTION!**

**SAFE IS AS SIMPLE AS A-
B-C**

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