



Safety Bulletin

Provided as a service of MCAA's Safety Excellence Initiative

Subject

Distracted Driving

Introduction

Distracted driving is a growing concern, especially for mechanical construction and service employers. Traffic fatalities increased by 6% in 2016, and 27% of crashes involve drivers talking and/or texting on cell phones. The risk of crashing when engaged in visual-manual sub-tasks is three times that of non-distracted drivers.

Distracted Driving

Distracted driving has always been a problem in our industry, but more recent technological advances have made it much worse. The use of cell phones by themselves was hazardous enough, but smart phone technology, including Internet access, social networking sites, and texting have turned distracted driving into an efficient killer.

Protection Against Distracted Driving-Related Crashes

To help protect yourself and others from distracted driving-related motor vehicle crashes, limit the use of any type of cell phone while driving, even if it's "hands free." Never use laptop computers or other devices that you have to look at while driving. Here's the best way to handle your work-related communications:

- Set up a voice mail box to receive your incoming calls and return them when you are not driving.
- In those rare cases when you absolutely can't wait to place a call, pull off the road to a safe place and make your call there.
- Let your regular callers know your driving schedule and asked them not to call while you're driving.
- Stay alert for other drivers who are distracted and be prepared to take evasive action.

Other Distractions

Other distractions such as adjusting the radio, entering information into or looking at maps on a GPS, eating, drinking, smoking, interacting with other passengers, and the like also can lead to motor vehicle crashes. Limit these activities as much as possible while driving. For example:

- Make adjustments to the radio volume and sound and set your radio station pre-sets before you begin to drive.
- If you're using a GPS, either enter the information before you begin driving or pull off the road to enter information, view maps, and make other adjustments.
- Stay alert when interacting with other passengers. If there is more than one passenger in the vehicle, let the passengers interact with one other while you concentrate on driving.

For additional information about this topic or to learn more about MCAA's Safety Excellence Initiative, contact Pete Chaney at 301 869 5800 or pchaney@mcaa.org.

OSHA's Distracted Driving Initiative

OSHA has established an initiative to attack distracted driving issues. In a letter to the nation's employers the agency states, "OSHA is partnering with others across government, industry, and the public to bring together important information and tools to attack texting while driving and other distracted driver hazards. For more information on distracted driving issues, go to OSHA's website at www.osha.gov."