

Safety Newsletter

July, 2014

This Month's Topic: Workplace Vehicle Safety

Motor vehicle crashes cost employers \$60 billion annually in medical care, legal expenses, property damage, and lost productivity. They drive up the cost of benefits such as workers' compensation, Social Security, and private health and disability insurance.

Every 12 minutes someone dies in a motor vehicle crash, every 10 seconds an injury occurs and every 5 seconds a crash occurs. Many of these incidents occur during the workday or during the commute to and from work. Employers bear the cost for injuries that occur both on and off the job.

The real tragedy is that these crashes are largely preventable.

Aggressive Driving

As traffic congestion continues to grow, motorists commuting to and from work and traveling for business purposes often find themselves caught up in bottlenecks and significant delays, wasting time and reducing their productivity. This situation creates a high level of frustration and can spark aggressive driving among these overwhelmed drivers. To protect against aggressive driving, remember that your primary responsibility is to drive focused and stay safe. Correct your own unsafe driving habits that are likely to endanger, antagonize or provoke other drivers.

Distractions Driving (See Alisto Newsletter, Issue 1, January 2014)

Longer commutes, an increase in heavy traffic, the availability of in-vehicle technology are all factors that result in driver distraction. More time in your vehicle results in less time at home or on the job, causing drivers to feel the pressure to multi-task to keep up with their responsibilities. Countless distractions tempt drivers to forget that their primary responsibility is to drive focused and stay safe.

Fatigued Driving

As a driver, your number one responsibility is to get yourself and your passengers to your destination safely. When behind the wheel, you always need to be alert and focused. At 55 mph, a vehicle travels the length of a football field in 3.7 seconds. This is no time for a "mini" snooze. Being an attentive driver, and looking out for the driver who isn't, is increasingly important.

Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driving

Alcohol use is involved in 40 percent of all fatal motor vehicle crashes, representing an average of one alcohol-related fatality every 30 minutes. Alcohol, certain prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and illegal drugs can all affect a person's ability to drive safely due to decreased alertness, concentration, coordination and reaction time. On our congested roadways, it's more important than ever to drive with a clear head and a sharp focus. Make it a life-governing rule not to drive when you've had too much to drink. On average, a driver makes over 200 decisions per mile, so it's critical that a driver make the decision to drive alert before getting behind the wheel. Not only will you be a safer driver but you will be in a much better position to defend yourself from the driver who doesn't make that choice.

Alisto Engineering 2014 Safety Statistics

Motor Vehicle Accidents/ Total Miles Driven (01/01/14 – 05/31/14)	Lost Work Days/ Total Work Days (01/01/14 – 05/31/14)	Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (01/01/14 – 05/31/14)
0/ 95,598 miles	0 days*/ 103 days	0*

* From BC Environmental Insurance

"Our lives can change forever in a matter of seconds. This is especially true while behind the wheel. Do not allow yourself to be distracted while trying to get to your destination. There will be plenty of time later for phone calls, texts, etc. when you arrive."

Jess Borrego

Sr. Project Manager

Alisto Engineering Group, Inc.

Work-Related Roadway Crashes - Facts & Statistics

- In 2005, 43,443 people were killed and 2,699,000 were injured in 6,159,000 police-reported motor vehicle crashes. Daily that represents 17,000 reported crashes and 119 deaths.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of occupational fatalities in the U.S.
- The most dangerous part of the day for any employee is the time they spend in their vehicle with a crash occurring every 5 seconds, property damage occurring every 7 seconds, an injury occurring every 10 seconds, and a motor vehicle fatality occurring every 12 minutes.
- 62% of fatalities occurred between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m.; 38% occurred on US State-designated highways, 26% on interstate highways, and 24% on a local road or street.
- Forty-one percent of the average vehicle miles traveled per household is from commuting to and from work (27%) and driving on work-related business (14%).
- In 2000, the economic cost of crashes to employers was \$60 billion resulting in 3 million lost workdays. Two-thirds of the cost was from on-the-job crashes while one-third was from off-the-job crashes for employees and their benefit-eligible dependents.
- In 8% of crashes fatal to a worker, the driver of the worker's vehicle was determined to have been drinking.
- 90% of motor vehicle crashes are caused by human error.

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Motor Vehicle Safety

Unlike other workplaces, the roadway is not a closed environment. Preventing work-related roadway crashes requires strategies that combine traffic safety principles and sound safety management practices. Although employers cannot control roadway conditions, they can promote safe driving behavior by providing safety information to workers and by setting and enforcing driver safety policies.

Safe Driving Practices for Employees

Employees are an employer's most valuable assets! The way that you drive says everything about you and your company. Make a positive statement by following these work-related safe driving practices.

Stay Safe

- Use a seat belt at all times – driver and passenger(s).



- Be well-rested before driving.
- Avoid taking medications that make you drowsy.
- Set a realistic goal for the number of miles that you can drive safely each day.
- If you are impaired by alcohol or any drug, do not drive.

Stay Focused

- Driving requires your full attention. Avoid distractions, such as adjusting the radio or other controls, eating or drinking, and talking on the phone.
- Continually search the roadway to be alert to situations requiring quick action.
- Stop about every two hours for a break. Get out of the vehicle to stretch, take a walk, and get refreshed.

Avoid Aggressive Driving

- Keep your cool in traffic!
- Be patient and courteous to other drivers.
- Do not take other drivers' actions personally.
- Reduce your stress by planning your route ahead of time (bring the maps and directions), allowing plenty of travel time, and avoiding crowded roadways and busy driving times.

Alisto employees that are required to drive on company business at any time are expected to consistently follow traffic and road rules and regulations, as well as company procedures (*See Alisto Employee Handbook*).

References

- <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/motorvehiclesafety/index.html>
- https://www.osha.gov/Publications/motor_vehicle_guide.html
- <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2004-136/>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2004-137/>
- <http://trafficsafety.org/safety>
- <http://trafficsafety.org/safety/fleet-safety/10-facts-employers-must-know>
- <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/motorvehiclesafety/index.html>
- <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/3314-08N-06-english-06-27-2007.html>

Image Credits

- https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/motorvehiclesafety/agenda_web_links.html
- <https://www.facebook.com/DriveSafelyWorkWeek>

Motor Vehicle Safety Resources

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

Employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthful workplace for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure the safety and health of America's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

NHTSA's mission is to save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce traffic-related health care and other economic costs. The organization can provide technical assistance, various highway safety awareness materials, and other support.

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

NIOSH, as the national agency responsible for occupational safety and health research, is committed to reducing the toll of work-related roadway crashes on American workers.

Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS)

NETS is an employer-led, nonprofit, public/private partnership dedicated to improving the safety and health of employees, their families, and members of the communities in which they live and work, by reducing the number of traffic crashes that occur on and off the job. Drive Safely Work Week (DSWW) is an annual campaign sponsored by NETS to promote safe driving practices for all employees.

