

eplica Safety Lines

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Before operating any machinery, make sure you are properly trained on safeguards and lock out /tagout procedures.

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Cell Phone Driving: A National Danger



July is National Cell Phone Courtesy Month. There's no doubt cell phones are a huge convenience in modern life. And there are many benefits for employees to have them while they are on the road. Here are some safety reasons to have a cell phone:

- ▶▶ Being able to summon help without leaving their vehicles in the event of a breakdown, a flat tire, or running out of gas
- ▶▶ Avoiding the risk of being struck by oncoming traffic or accosted by strangers who may stop or approach when you are stuck on the side of the road
- ▶▶ Being able to summon police and emergency medical services immediately in the event of an accident or other incident
- ▶▶ Being able to report accidents or breakdowns they witness, serious traffic congestion, poor driving conditions, or even drunk drivers without leaving the vehicle
- ▶▶ Getting directions when lost without having to stop in an unfamiliar or threatening area

It's also true, however, that cell phones introduce new dangers to driving. Driving while texting for example; creates the obvious danger of drivers taking their eyes off the road and their hands off the wheel; similarly, driving while talking on a handheld phone requires taking the hands off the wheel. Employees should also realize that driving with a headset is also considered dangerous because it still distracts the driver's attention from the road.

Studies have shown that talking on the phone—regardless of what type—is dangerous because it takes the driver's mind off his or her driving. This situation is called "inattention blindness," and it's more of a threat with phone conversations than with conversations with passengers because passengers provide a

check with additional sets of eyes to point out road conditions if a driver misses them because of the distraction of the conversation.

Make your employees aware of exactly why it's dangerous to drive while talking on a cell phone. Describe these hazards:

- ▶▶ Failing to pay attention to the road while dialing
- ▶▶ Failing to respond quickly to changing traffic patterns while talking on the phone
- ▶▶ Wandering into another lane while conversing
- ▶▶ Speeding up or slowing down while talking on the phone
- ▶▶ Failing to control steering sufficiently while juggling a phone and the wheel
- ▶▶ Getting angry or excited by a phone conversation and allowing the heightened emotion to affect driving or turn into road rage
- ▶▶ Being startled by a ringing phone
- ▶▶ Swerving when reaching to answer the phone

There are ways to take advantage of the safety benefits of cell phones without risking the hazards of cell phone use while driving.

Encourage your employees to follow these safe and responsible cell phone habits:

- ▶▶ Follow the cell phone use motor vehicle laws of your state
- ▶▶ Limit cell phone use while driving to absolutely necessary calls
- ▶▶ Avoid using the phone while in stop-and-go traffic and other traffic patterns that pose the greatest hazards
- ▶▶ Maintain a safe speed while talking on the phone
- ▶▶ Make sure that steering is firmly under control while driving and talking on the phone
- ▶▶ Avoid calls while driving that provoke strong emotions or involve complicated matters that require focusing full attention on the call
- ▶▶ Postpone or end a phone conversation when driving conditions warrant
- ▶▶ Pull over to the side to make or take a call when driving conditions are such that it would be hazardous to drive and talk on the phone at the same time

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Cell Phone Driving: A National Danger

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- ▶▶ According to the Cellular Telecommunications & Internet Association, approximately 175 million people in the United States use cell phones compared with 4.3 million people 15 years ago.
- ▶▶ Recent estimates suggest that cell phone users do over half of their cell phone time while driving.
- ▶▶ Many states have banned cell phone use while driving. For safety's sake, employees need to know and follow their state's laws.

July Safety Tip

Machine Guarding

Employee exposure to unguarded or inadequately guarded machines is prevalent in many workplaces.

Consequently, workers who operate and maintain machinery suffer approximately 18,000 amputations, lacerations, crushing injuries, abrasions, and over 800 deaths per year.

Amputation is one of the most severe and crippling types of injuries in the occupational workplace, and often results in permanent disability.

Before operating any machinery, make sure you are properly trained on safeguards and lock out /tagout procedures.

Contact Us

Editor-in-Chief/Writer
CLAUDIA C. HARO

Editorial Consultant/Writer
JEFF ADCOCK

Staff Writer
APRIL FLAK

Contact us:
allsafety@eplicaservices.com

Safe Feet Are Productive Feet!



Our feet often don't get much attention unless there is a problem. However, statistics tell the story about the importance of preventing workplace foot injuries:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 60,000 foot injuries per year result in lost work days.

BLS cites a study of foot injuries that found 75 percent of the injuries occurred when workers were not in compliance.

According to the National Council on Compensation Insurance, the average cost of a lost work day foot injury is \$9,600.

Therefore, it's a good idea to think about proper footwear before undertaking any job. Workers may be exposed to various hazardous conditions on the job such as slippery surfaces, climbing hazards, handling or working around heavy equipment or materials and working around electricity. These different working conditions

Likely require different safety footwear to protect the foot, and the worker, from injury.

When choosing safety footwear, the goal is to select the appropriate shoe or boot required for the job activity, equipment, and environment. Some situations may require metal-toed shoes or boots to protect the top part of the foot. These can make a significant difference in preventing an injury to the foot from a falling object.

Safety shoes or boots with impact protection should be worn when workers carry or handle heavy materials such as objects, parts or tools and for any situation where objects may fall onto the foot. Workers should also be required to wear impact protection shoes or boots when their work involves wheeling carts that carry heavy materials or when working around heavy pipes or in situations where a heavy object may roll over a worker's foot.

Safety shoes or boots with puncture protection should be required where there are potential hazards of a worker stepping on sharp objects such as nails, wires, tacks, sheet metal, etc. Also, special types of insulating or conductive shoes may be necessary for certain types of electrical work.

Employees should be instructed in the correct type of safety footwear necessary for the work they will be performing and the work environment they will be exposed to. They should also understand the importance of wearing the protective footwear at all times during this exposure.

Ongoing workplace education and training in proper use of personal protective equipment is an important part of keeping your workers safe and on the job.

July Safety Quote

"Keep cool in the sun, wear light-colored clothing."