

September 29, 2011

## SAFETY BULLETIN

### Drive Safely Work Week October 3-7, 2011: *Focus 360°...Getting There Safely is Everyone's Business*

Drive Safely Work Week (DSWW) is a national campaign designed to raise awareness about the dangers of distracted driving, the behaviors that encourage it, and the impact the employer community can have to curtail this dangerous activity through creation and enforcement of policies to address cell phone use, texting, and other distractions. This annual safety campaign is a great opportunity to remind employees about safe driving practices and your expectations for compliance with state laws and your company's mobile device policy.

As this year's campaign theme suggests, safe driving is *everyone's* responsibility. Drivers, passengers, and pedestrians can all take an active role in preventing distracted driving accidents. **The free DSWW tool kit is available at [www.trafficsafety.org](http://www.trafficsafety.org)** to help educate all parties about how they can reduce distracted driving and support employer efforts to initiate or sustain a company mobile device policy.

Last year, we distributed a sample distracted driving policy with our DSWW Safety Bulletin. That sample policy is still available on the CCMCA website at <http://www.ccmca.org/links/safety-center>. You may also view a summary of the cell phone policies of twenty-four (24) companies with vehicle fleets at [http://trafficsafety.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/CellPhonePolicy-ReferenceTable2\\_24\\_10.pdf](http://trafficsafety.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/CellPhonePolicy-ReferenceTable2_24_10.pdf). See how yours compares.

Use DSWW October 3-7 to incorporate driving safety into a Toolbox Talk, obtain signed distracted driving policies from your employees, and remind them of some critical facts. For instance...

#### Did You Know?

- If you double your speed from 30 mpg to 60 mpg, the braking distance isn't twice as long, it's four times as long.
- The No. 1 cause of distracted driving accidents in California since 2001 is cell phones according to the California Highway Patrol.
- In 2008, it became illegal in California for all drivers to talk using a hand-held wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle.
- In 2009, it became illegal in California for all drivers to text while operating a motor vehicle.
- Using a cell phone behind the wheel reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent. Hang up and drive.
- When driving just one mile you make approximately 200 decisions! Keep your eyes on the road, your hands on the wheel, and your head in the game.

**Are You Driving Distracted?** If you are guilty of any one of the following while driving the answer is “Yes!”

- Cell phone use
- iPods, iPads, laptop computers, or any tablet device
- Radios and CD players (including loud music)
- Adjusting vehicle controls
- Passengers
- Programming GPS systems
- Eating
- Smoking
- Daydreaming
- Sleepiness or fatigue
- Under the influence of mind-altering substances (including prescription and over the counter drugs)

The primary goal of safe driving is to protect human life and preserve the health and well-being of fellow drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and cyclists, but sometimes positive reinforcement needs a little help. So, traffic laws and fines might also provide some motivation to maintain focus on the task at hand – namely keeping hands on the wheel, eyes on the road, and head in the game. While the fines for violations vary from county to county, getting caught can be pricey.

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- First offense talking or texting while driving can cost between \$97-\$300 depending on locale – up from the previous \$20 fine for a first offense.
- SB 1613 (2006) – Made it illegal for California drivers to talk on a cell phone without a hands-free device while driving (effective 7/1/08).
- SB 33 (2007) – Prohibited drivers under the age of 18 from texting, talking on a cell phone or using any “mobile device” technology while driving, even with a hands-free device (effective 7/1/08).
- SB 28 (2008) – Made it illegal for all drivers in California to send, read, or write text messages while driving (effective 1/1/09).
- SB 159 (2009) – aka Move Over/Slow Down Law - Requires a person driving a vehicle on a freeway and approaching in a lane immediately adjacent to a stationary, authorized emergency vehicle that displays emergency lights, a stationary tow truck that displays flashing amber warning lights, or a stationary marked Caltrans vehicle displaying flashing amber warning lights to safely change lanes or slow to a reasonable speed (effective 1/1/10). Failure to do so can result in a fine up to \$50.

The issue of distracted driving has become so prevalent that the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has proposed a ban on the use of cell phones *by all commercial drivers*. While the NTSB cannot require a ban, they sent the proposal to both the states and the federal government. If enacted, the ban would impact 3.7 million drivers. However, the NTSB, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, and the Governors Highway Safety Association believe that a ban put in place by employers would have more success. If drivers know their jobs are dependent on not using cell phones while driving the message is more effective. So, remember ***Focus 360<sup>o</sup>...Getting There Safely is Everyone's Business.***

**The message of *Drive Safely Work Week* is one that should be perpetuated all year long, and the DSWW tool kit materials are not dated and may be used anytime throughout the year.**