



Safe Driving Is No Accident

When you think of safety hazards and employee injuries, you probably focus on what goes on inside your workplace. But one of the greatest threats to worker safety is right outside your door—on the road.

In addition to impaired driving, statistics tell us that other major driving hazards include distracted driving, aggressive driving, fatigued driving, and driving without a seat belt.

Distracted Driving

OSHA reports that distracted driving is a factor in more than 4,000 motor vehicle accidents a day. And that's not surprising. How often do you see drivers talking on a phone, fiddling with the radio or climate controls, or eating while they drive? How often do you do it yourself?

Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving has become a national epidemic. Traffic jams, bottlenecks, and construction inevitably lead to driver frustration, and as the level of frustration rises, so does the risk of aggressive driving. OSHA cites excessive speed, tailgating, failing to signal lane changes, running red lights, and passing on the right as examples of aggressive driving.

Fatigued Driving

OSHA reports that fatigued or drowsy driving may be a factor in more than 100,000 crashes each year resulting in 40,000 injuries and more than 1,500 deaths. A National Sleep Foundation study revealed that 51 percent of adults have driven while drowsy, and 17 percent report having fallen asleep at the wheel.

Driving Without a Seat Belt

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that seat belts save nearly 12,000 lives and prevent more than 300,000 serious injuries every year. Wearing a seat belt in a car can reduce your risk of dying in a traffic crash by 45 percent, by as much as 60 percent in a truck or SUV. What those statistics tell you is that you need to require seat belt use in company vehicles and spot check to make sure that drivers are at least leaving your facility with seat belts on.

Source: BLR Safety Daily Advisor, November 24, 2009