

FACE THE FACTS HAZ ALERT



To prevent motor vehicle injuries while working:

- Employers should implement a comprehensive employee driver safety training program.
- Employees should wear seat belts at all times.
- Employees should be aware of distractions and pay attention at all times.

Working Drivers Killed in Motor Vehicle Collisions Were Not Wearing Safety Belts

In Kentucky in 2004, 3,194 people were injured in occupational motor vehicle collisions (MVCs), and 135 people died; 25 of those deaths were working drivers. There were 4,567 semi-trucks and 3,328 single-unit trucks involved in work-related MVCs.

Driver distraction/inattention accounted for 3,113 of the occupational MVCs compared to 1,404 of the non-occupational MVCs. Misjudged clearance was a factor in 1,516 work-related collisions, and failure to yield the right of way was a factor in 523 of the occupational MVCs.

Following are case descriptions for three Kentucky MVC work-related fatality cases:

Case 1: Three company employees were returning from a job when the driver lost control of their van, crossed the center line into the opposite lane, and was hit by a coal truck. The coal truck driver then lost control and landed on a passenger vehicle. The van driver suffered fatal injuries and the other 2 employees suffered



minor injuries. None of the employees were wearing their seat belts. The other drivers involved in the MVC were belted and were not injured.

Case 2: A dump truck driver who was training a new driver was fatally injured when the truck they were traveling in went over a 70 foot embankment. The trainee was driving and the victim (trainer) was the passenger. The trainee was wearing his seat belt and survived, whereas, the trainer (victim) was not wearing his seat belt. The trainee had worked for the company 8 days and had received no task-specific training.

Case 3: A semi-truck driver died when his vehicle veered off the highway and ran into a rock embankment. The driver was not wearing a seat belt and was ejected from the vehicle.

WEARING A SAFETY BELT CAN REDUCE YOUR RISK OF DYING IN A TRAFFIC CRASH BY 45% IN A CAR AND BY AS MUCH AS 60% IN A TRUCK OR SUV.

Employers Should Implement a Comprehensive Employee Driver Safety Training Program.

There should be strict enforcement of this policy and strict consequences if this policy is not followed.

1. A traffic safety policy should be established by the employer, containing relevant local, state, and national regulations, that is communicated to all employees who drive for work purposes, through distribution of information and regular company meetings. Employees should be required to sign a driver agreement that they understand and will adhere to the provisions of the traffic safety policy.
2. Motor vehicle record checks should be performed on all new employees and checked periodically on all workers who drive for work purposes.
3. All work-related crashes should be reported to employers to determine the root cause, and to develop prevention strategies to prevent similar types of incidents.
4. New drivers should receive task-specific training pertaining to the type of vehicle to be driven at work as well as the specific job duties involving the vehicle.

Employees Should be Aware of Distractions and Pay Attention At All Times.

Drivers should constantly practice defensive driving techniques and be prepared to take quick action on the roadway. The driver's attention should always be on the roadway ahead. Avoid the most common distractive actions:

1. Keep your eyes on the road while conversing with passengers.
2. Adjust vehicle panel controls before you begin your trip.
3. Do not eat while driving.
4. Pull off the highway to conduct cell phone conversations.
5. Know your trip route in advance so you do not need to read a map or directions while driving.

Employees Should Wear Seat Belts At All Times.

All employees should be required to wear safety belts while operating a company-owned vehicle or while on company business. This should apply to both drivers and passengers in the vehicle.

References:

1. "Guidelines for Employers to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crashes". NETS, NHTSA, OSHA Joint Publication. Web site: http://www.osha.gov/Publications/motor_vehicle_guide.pdf
2. MSHA Fatality report # MAI-2005-13
3. NIOSH Motor Vehicle Safety web address: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/injury/traumamv.html>

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