

KENTUCKY HAZ ALERT

To Prevent Driver Distraction,

Employers should:

- Provide training on the importance of being attentive and not engaging in distracting tasks or behaviors while driving.
- Develop policies that minimize or eliminate the use of in-vehicle devices while driving

Employees should:

- Not use dispatching devices while driving
- Not text or manually dial a cell phone while driving
- Refrain from activities such as reading, writing or map reading while driving

WORKERS KILLED DUE TO DRIVER DISTRACTION

From January 2011 through April 2012, three workers were killed as a direct result of driver distraction. Following are the case descriptions for the three deaths:

Case 1: A 53-year-old retired fire chief was working for an environmental company to clean up a tractor trailer crash along an interstate. They were working in the right lane when a box truck crashed into the work zone, striking the worker, and killing him.

Case 2: A 50-year-old semi-truck driver was transporting a load of asphalt flux. He had been driving for approximately five hours when for an unknown reason, the unit left the interstate, sideswiped a SUV parked on the shoulder, drove through a guardrail then proceeded into a



ravine. The driver was ejected from the cab and was pronounced dead at the scene.

Case 3: A 55-year-old male truck driver was transporting sheet metal. It is unknown how long he had been driving when he exited from the highway, traveled partially up the ramp, and struck the left side guard rail. The truck left the road, traveled down an embankment and overturned. The driver was extricated by mechanical means and declared dead at the scene.

**ALWAYS BE ATTENTIVE AND REFRAIN
FROM ENGAGING IN DISTRACTING TASKS
OR BEHAVIORS WHILE DRIVING!**

EMPLOYERS SHOULD PROVIDE TRAINING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ATTENTIVE

CMV drivers should not engage in distracting tasks or behaviors. There are three main types of distraction, including visual: taking your eyes off the road; manual: taking your hands off the wheel; and cognitive: taking your mind off what you are doing. Even routine types of behaviors such as reaching for an object, putting on sunglasses, or reaching for food can be distracting and could lead to safety critical events. Drivers should maintain two hands steering contact while driving.

EMPLOYERS SHOULD DEVELOP POLICIES THAT MINIMIZE OR ELIMINATE THE USE OF IN-VEHICLE DEVICES WHILE DRIVING

Fleet safety managers should be aware of the types of devices that CMV drivers may bring in the truck cab and use while driving. Even devices that seem harmless, such as calculators, have been found to increase crash risk if used while driving. Devices such as phones that have to be manually handled, personal tablets, and laptop computers should not be used while driving. These devices are only appropriate to use when the driver has pulled over and is stopped.

EMPLOYEES SHOULD NOT USE DISPATCHING DEVICES WHILE DRIVING

Use of these devices is very similar to the manual dialing of a cell phone. If drivers need to use a dispatching device, they should only do so when the truck is stopped. Technology groups are researching ways to make these useful devices safer to use, for example by interacting only when the vehicle is parked or using voice recognition for hands free usage.

EMPLOYEES SHOULD NOT TEXT OR MANUALLY DIAL A CELL PHONE WHILE DRIVING

Rules prohibiting both of these behaviors have been enacted for CMV drivers by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Texting was banned by a rule effective October 27, 2010 and manual dialing of a cell phone was prohibited by a rule effective January 3, 2012. Hands-free phones may still be used by drivers as long as they are not reaching for those phones to use them. Fines for drivers who do not comply with these rules are steep for the driver and the company.

EMPLOYEES SHOULD REFRAIN FROM ACTIVITIES SUCH AS READING, WRITING, AND READING MAPS WHILE DRIVING

These activities may be common and brief in duration, but they have been found to draw visual attention away from driving, thus creating a safety risk. Reading, writing, and reading maps may be necessary for a CMV driver's job, but they are not necessary while actually driving. These behaviors should only be performed when the truck is stopped. Know the route in advance and, if using a navigation system, pre-program it.

For more information, contact:

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<http://www.kiprc.uky.edu/face.html>

References

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