



Cell Phone Use & Driving

Employer Response to Cognitive Distraction



Understanding crash causation

“The real key to significantly improving safety is keeping your eyes on the road. In contrast, cognitively intense tasks can have a measurable effect in the laboratory, but the actual driving risks are much lower in comparison.”

Source: Virginia Tech Transportation Institute

“Talking - be it interacting with passengers or on the cell phone - has a mixed effect on driving safety. In fact, in the case of drowsy drivers (e.g. truckers), talking on cell phones can actually reduce crashes. Evidence shows that so-called “cognitive distractions” aren’t much of an issue, but physical distractions are.”

Source: Major Auto Company



Understanding crash causation

“Using mobile phones can cause drivers to take their eyes off the road, their hands off the steering wheel, and their minds off the road and the surrounding situation. It is this type of distraction – known as cognitive distraction – which appears to have the biggest impact on driving behaviour.”

***Source: World Health Organization
(with funding from NHTSA)***

“There is no conclusive evidence on whether hands-free cell phone use is less risky than hand-held use.”

Source: Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA)



NSC Calls for Total ban



National Safety Council

NEWS

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For Immediate Release
Jan. 12, 2009

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Editors' note: scientific references are available from NSC media relations, 630/775-2307 or media@nsc.org.

**National Safety Council Calls for
Nationwide Ban on Cell Phone Use While Driving**
Bold Plan Seeks to Involve Law Makers, Businesses and Public

Itasca, Ill. – The National Safety Council today is calling on motorists to stop using cell phones and messaging devices while driving, and is urging businesses to enact policies prohibiting it and governors and legislators in all 50 states and the District of Columbia to pass laws banning the behavior.



Sample cell phone policy

Company employees may not use cellular telephones or mobile electronic devices while operating a motor vehicle under any of the following situations, regardless of whether a hands-free device is used:

- When employee is operating a vehicle owned, leased or rented by the Company.
- When the employee is operating a personal motor vehicle in connection with Company business.
- When the motor vehicle is on Company property.
- When the cellular telephone or mobile electronic device is company owned or leased.
- When the employee is using the cellular telephone or mobile electronic device to conduct Company business.



Sample List of Companies with policies

- Exxon/Mobil
- DuPont
- Halliburton
- Shell
- Chevron
- BP
- Enbridge
- Argonne National Labs
- City Of Tulsa, OK
- CA Office of Traffic Safety
- Abbott
- EnCana
- Cargill
- CSX Intermodal
- Schneider National
- Sysco Corporation
- Time Warner Cable
- Potash
- Owens Corning
- NTSB

Just a sample - no national database of companies with policies



Company cell phone policies

Survey of NSC member companies – August 2009

- 2,004 respondents
- 469 (23.3%) had bans that included both hands-free and handheld wireless communication devices
- 36.1% of NSC members w/o policies have plans in the next 12 months to create policies
- Only seven companies (1.5%) with policies reported a decrease in employee productivity
- 46 companies (10%) reported a productivity increase



Company cell phone policies

Survey of Fortune 500 companies – September 2010

- 20% of Fortune 500 companies surveyed have total bans in place – estimated 2 million+ employees
- 22 percent of companies with total bans said they experienced decreased crash rates, and the same experienced decreased property damage, indicating the policies work
- Among those who responded and had total bans
 - 19 percent said productivity increased
 - 22 percent said productivity remained the same
 - 52 percent don't yet know impact on productivity
 - 7 percent said productivity decreased



Employer liability

\$21.6 million: A stay-at-home dad received the award for the violent wreck that killed his wife, after a jury found a driver negligent for either talking on her cell phone or some other distraction.

\$21 million - A soft drink beverage salesperson driving a passenger vehicle was using a hands-free headset, in compliance with a handheld ban, when she struck another vehicle and injured the driver. A jury awarded \$21 million in damages to the injured driver.

\$20.9 million: Dykes Industries of Little Rock, Ark., lost a personal injury suit in which its employee was using a cell phone when the crash occurred.

\$18 million: Holmes Transport, of Muscle Shoals, Ala., was ordered to pay the damages by a U.S. District Judge to Mark Tiburzi who was left unable to walk or talk after a crash caused by one of their drivers distracted by a cell phone.

\$5.2 million: International Paper employee Vanessa McGrogan was using her company-supplied cell phone when she rear-ended a vehicle driven by Debra Ford.

\$2.5 million: State of Hawaii agreed to pay as its share of liability in a crash involving a state employee who was talking on her cell phone when she hit a tourist.

\$1.5 million: City of Palo Alto has agreed to pay the victim of a 2006 vehicle crash involving a city worker who was using his cell phone while driving.



CEO Selling Proposition

1. Employee cell phone use while driving is a significant and growing safety threat to our employees and the driving public.
2. It has also become a significant financial risk and liability.
3. If a total ban policy is properly implemented and supported, there will not be a negative effect on productivity, customer service or employee morale.



Thank you