



Employer Traffic Safety Programs



Traffic crashes are the number one killer of employees. Speeding -- exceeding the posted speed limit or driving too fast for conditions -- is a factor in 25 percent of those crashes, costing employers \$9.25 billion per year. Approximately 56 percent of all drivers involved in speed-related fatal crashes were under the influence of alcohol. Employers incur costs for injuries caused by traffic crashes through medical care, lost productivity, property damage, motor vehicle liability, and wage premiums. To combat the effects of speed and alcohol in motor vehicle crashes and improve employee welfare, employers are taking steps to prevent motor vehicle crashes.

EMPLOYER TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAMS

To reduce injury costs paid by the employer, many companies have developed traffic safety programs. Following are two examples of programs implemented by employers.



United Parcel Service

With over 74,000 drivers nationwide, UPS boasts a solid record of safety. Beyond employment history, UPS does a background check on the driving history of all applicants. Once hired, all drivers fill out an annual report of driving history, both on and off the job. Don Weber, a Health and Safety Manager at UPS, says that it is very rare for drivers to have a moving violation listed on their annual reports. However, when it does happen, "we treat it as a serious indicator of a problem."

To prevent speeding, UPS has a strict policy against radar detectors. "We want our drivers to drive at the speed of traffic, but never exceed the posted speed limit," says Mr. Weber.

Many companies could learn from the UPS experience, which uses an integrated message throughout UPS for all employees. Mr. Weber explained, "Every UPS employee understands that we have zero tolerance for unsafe behavior behind the wheel. This means fastening safety belts, driving at a safe speed, and not driving impaired."



Another employer, the Loctite Corporation of Rocky Hill, Connecticut, checks its applicants' driving records through regular motor vehicle record inspections. This system provides employers with information about the past driving record of potential hires. Loctite will not hire applicants with more than three moving violations within the previous two years. For current employees, Loctite provides driver training if an employee's driving record indicates hazardous moving violations (such as speeding, failure to yield, or failure to stop at a red light or stop sign).



To help ensure that its drivers travel at safe speeds, Loctite also does not allow radar detectors. According to Leslie Link, Driver Safety Manager for Loctite, "as many states in which we operate raise their legal speed limit, it is imperative that we maintain policies to ensure travel at a safe speed. This policy benefits our drivers and others on the road, and it affects our bottom line by preventing costly motor vehicle crashes."

WINNING THE RACE: REDUCING THE COSTS OF MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES

Despite the progress of Loctite, UPS, and many companies across the United States, motor vehicle crashes remain the number one killer of working Americans. However, as the above stories illustrate, motor vehicle crashes can often be prevented through a combination of employer support plus employee awareness and education. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has helped establish the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS). NETS is an organization for employers who are interested in setting up a traffic safety program in their company. For information about setting up a traffic safety program that will benefit employers, employees, their families, and the bottom line, contact your NETS state coordinator or the NETS National Office.

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