Cell Phone Usage Safety Topic

This section addresses cell phone usage in the workplace and notably in fleet vehicles or driving situations.

While the utilization of cell phones in the workplace has increased productivity by allowing employees to remain in constant communication, it has also raised several issues among them is safety. This is true especially in the case of cell phone usage while driving a fleet or company vehicle. Recent studies suggest that as much as half of all cell phone usage is done while operating a vehicle. As an employer liability issues can arise if a car accident should happen while an employee was on a work related phone call.

Cell phone usage laws differ from state to state. Some state and local law prohibit talking on a cell phone without the use of a headset (allowing both hands to still remain on the wheel). A written company policy regarding cell phone usage should be constructed after checking with state/local laws.

Talking and Driving Hazards

- Failing to pay attention to the road while dialing
- Failing to respond quickly to changing traffic
- Wandering into another lane while conversing
- Failing to maintain a constant speed
- Failing to control steering sufficiently while juggling a phone and the wheel
- Swerving when reaching to answer the phone

Responsible Employee Cell Phone Habits

- Following the state/local cell phone usage laws
- Limiting cell phone use while driving to necessary calls
- Avoiding using the phone while in stop-and-go traffic

- Maintaining a safe speed while talking on the phone
- Making sure that steering is firmly under control while driving
- Avoiding calls that provoke that require focusing full attention on the call
- Postponing or ending a phone conversation in adverse driving conditions
- Pulling over to the side to make or take a call

Talking and Driving Hazards

- The No.1 source of driver inattention is use of a wireless device
- Drivers using cell phones are 4 times as likely to get into accidents
- Distraction from cell phone use while driving extends a driver’s reaction as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent.
- Driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity by 37 percent