Distractions Created by Smartphones When Not in Use Meeting Kit

DISTRACTIONS CREATED BY SMARTPHONES EVEN WHEN NOT IN USE SAFETY TALK

It is a well-known fact that actively using a smartphone (or a regular cellphone) distracts you from other tasks at hand. Research shows there are negative effects from just having your smartphone in the area near you.

DANGERS OF MOBILE DEVICES

Kills Productivity

Employers lose around 5 hours or more of productivity each day. Users report picking up their phones 100 or more times per day. Trying to refocus after a text conversation or a few minutes of mindless scrolling can take some time.

Driving Distracted

Researchers have compared the level of distraction while operating a cell phone to having a blood alcohol level of 0.08. The National Safety Council estimates that 1.6 million crashes are caused by drivers using cell phones and texting each year. Research also has shown that a cell phone conversation while driving is a greater distraction than conversing with a passenger. Drivers reacted significantly slower to unexpected events in the first two minutes of the phone conversation and are, for a large part of the conversation, unaware of traffic movements around them.

Notable Dangers

- Cell phone use can cause inattention on the plant floor, outside the facility, in a company vehicle, or on the job

site
- Cell phone use in a noisy environment causes the user to focus even more intently on the call and less on their surroundings
- Co-workers can be distracted by other employee’s cell phone use
- Inattention distraction may result in property damage or physical injury

Hazard Awareness

- For supervisors that must use a cell phone for work, step aside from the work area and moving equipment into a safe spot to make or receive calls
- Do not operate a cell phone around flammable liquids
- Know site-specific hazard areas associated with cell phone use
- If you see someone talking on a cell phone and standing in an active work area (such as a salesman or project manager), recognize that they are probably not fully aware of activities going on around them and make a point to watch out for them.
- Turn off cell phones within 100 feet of any blasting area

Mitigation Techniques

- Never use a cell phone while operating equipment or working on the production floor
- Never use a cell phone to send or receive text messages while operating equipment or working on the production floor
- As with driving, your work tasks require your full attention
- Store your cell phone in an area where it’s ring will not startle you or a co-worker in the area
- Let calls go straight to voicemail and be retrieved at a later time
- Do not text while driving a motor vehicle (DOT regulations prohibit truck drivers from texting while driving a commercial vehicle)

FINAL WORD

While the majority of individuals recognize the dangers of using a cellphone while completing tasks, many do not realize the impact of just having a smartphone in our presence can have on our ability to focus and problem solve. When completing tasks that require your full focus, consider putting your cellphone in a different area where it will not serve as a distraction for you.