Fixed Objects (Motor Vehicle Safety) Meeting Kit

FIXED OBJECTS SAFETY TALK

Striking fixed objects with moving equipment or vehicles is common in manufacturing settings, on construction sites, and for occupations such as delivery drivers. Striking fixed objects is 100% avoidable if the proper steps are taken to prevent these kinds of incidents.

ELIMINATION – BEST WAY

Elimination of the exposure to the hazard is the single best way to prevent these accidents. The only way fixed objects can be struck is from the movement of the vehicle you are controlling.

Elimination can be achieved by not being near the fixed object or by not installing the fixed object in an area where it can be struck.

CAUSES OF FIXED OBJECT COLLISIONS

Collisions with fixed objects typically occur when a single vehicle leaves the roadway and hits objects like utility poles, trees, or traffic barriers.

Driver negligence is frequently the cause of single-vehicle crashes. Some of the reasons include:

- Intoxication
- Speeding
- Fatigue
- Distracted driving

OTHER CAUSES

Manufacturer. If a vehicle's defective part, such as the brakes, caused a driver to veer off the road into an object, the accident victims could have a products liability claim against the manufacturer of the vehicle and defective part.

Another driver. In some cases, the actions of another driver can cause a fixed-object accident even if the negligent driver's vehicle does not collide with one crashing into the object.

Road conditions. Some fixed-object wrecks are caused by the defective design of the road, lack of maintenance, or lack of warnings about dangerous road conditions.

PREVENT CRASHES WITH STATIONARY OBJECTS

Hitting stationary objects are preventable crashes. The key to preventing such accidents is to recognize the hazards that can lead to a collision with a stationary object and take appropriate defensive measures.

ENVIRONMENT

Accidents involving stationary objects often occur in parking lots at truck stops, rest areas, and customer facilities. Bridges, low-hanging wires, overhangs, and signs are additional hazards if the driver is unaware of the height of his/her vehicle.

EQUIPMENT

Large trucks have several blind spots; these spots make it difficult to manage the space around the truck even at low speeds. Also, dirty, damaged, or inoperable mirrors hinder a driver's ability to identify hazards.

PERSONAL BEHAVIORS

Driver distraction inside the cab and out are a risk any time the vehicle is in motion. Likewise, failing to inspect the area around the truck (and above) for stationary objects in the vehicle's path can lead to accidents.

BEFORE-PARKING

- Slow down when entering a parking area; a crash negates all haste.
- Avoid parking near stationary objects, if possible.
- Focus on driving and avoid distractions, like talking on a cell phone, even at low speeds.
- Try to time deliveries during non-peak traffic times.
- Know the height of your truck and be mindful of low-hanging signs, overhangs, etc.

BEFORE BACKING

- Remember GOAL; get out and look behind the truck to ensure it is clear of hazards.
- Use a spotter and traffic control, especially if backing across traffic lanes.
- Use your mirrors and do not rely solely on backing cameras.
- Roll down the windows and turn off all devices to limit noise distractions.

BEFORE DRIVING AWAY

- Walk around the truck to identify potential hazards.
- Plan your exit route to ensure there are no hazards in your path.
- Set out orange cones to protect your exit route if a wide turn is needed.

WHILE DRIVING

- Know the height of your tractor and trailer.
- When route planning, do not rely solely on GPS for route

restrictions – use your eyes and sound judgment to make a safe decision, even if it means finding an alternate route.

FINAL WORD

There are many ways to prevent striking a fixed object. Elimination of work tasks near these objects or avoiding installing fixed objects near paths of travel in the first place is the best choice. A combination of safeguards is another effective method to reduce the chance of striking fixed objects.