Motor Vehicle Safety Meeting Kit

Year after year, motor vehicle incidents are at the top of the list for cause of workplace fatalities. Off the job, they take tens of thousands of lives a year. Driving safely while off the job is just as important of driving safely while on the job. A serious car crash will affect your family emotionally as well as probably financially. Serious injuries sustained in a car crash will affect your ability to earn an income. Not only will your family be affected from a car crash off the job, but your company and coworkers will as well. Everyone has a role at work and when one person isn't healthy or misses work, the company loses a valuable piece to that puzzle.

SHARE RESPONSIBILITY

Regardless what the statistics are in relation to the fatality and injuries in motor vehicle crashes, road safety is a shared responsibility between employers and employees.

Reducing motor vehicle crash deaths was one of the great public health achievements of the 20th century for the US. However, more than 32,000 people are killed and 2 million are injured each year from motor vehicle crashes. In 2013, the US crash death rate was more than twice the average of other high-income countries. In the US, front seat belt use was lower than in most other comparison countries. One in 3 crash deaths in the US involved drunk driving, and almost 1 in 3 involved speeding. Lower death rates in other high-income countries and a high percentage of risk factors in the US suggest that we can make more progress in reducing crash deaths.

SAFE DRIVING TIPS

Before You Drive

- **Manage journeys –** Ask yourself if you can get your work done without driving. Can you use a phone call, an email, an

online meeting to avoid unnecessary driving? Can you reduce risks by using public transit?

- **Taxis and ride-hailing services** are travel options you can use to eliminate some of the driving you do. Use the suggested practices in this tip sheet to ensure a safe trip.
- **If you need to drive, prepare for the trip.** Even if it's a short trip, TripCheck is a handy online tool to help you get ready for the trip ahead.
- **Prepare yourself –** Are you well-rested, alert and confident to reach your destination?
- **Prepare a trip plan –** Check the route you intend to travel and scope out an alternate route just in case. Check traffic and road conditions. Set up a check-in contact, and share your plan with your supervisor.
- **Prepare your vehicle –** Are the seat, mirrors and headrest adjusted for you? Do a pre-trip inspection to confirm everything is working properly. Is the maintenance up to date? If you don't think the vehicle is up to the trip, talk to your supervisor.

While You Drive

- It's up to you to know the rules and make sure you follow them.
- Wear your seatbelt.
- Take a break from driving at least once every two hours. Stretch your legs. Have a quick walk. Rehydrate.
- Pay attention and avoid distractions. Don't use a cell phone or adjust the GPS while driving. When you're behind the wheel, driving is your only job.
- Drive for the conditions. Speed limits are set for optimal driving conditions. Adjust your speed so that it's right for you and your vehicle in those conditions.

After You Drive

- Report any vehicle damage or required maintenance.
- Share information about unsafe routes or things to watch out for so your colleagues don't encounter the same problems, are better prepared or can make other adjustments like

timing.

OTHER TIPS

- Do not engage in other activities while driving. Activities such as using cellphones, eating, or even just reaching for an item takes your eyes and focus off the road. A large majority of accidents are caused by distracted drivers.
- Be a defensive driver. Always leave yourself an out when driving. Think about your next move if an accident was to happen in front of you or a car ran the next stop light. Thinking ahead and being proactive when driving can save your life.
- Maintain a clean and well-kept vehicle. Dirty windows and dust can be distracting and make it hard to see while driving. Loose cargo such as empty water bottles, tools, PPE, and other items are not only a distraction, but they can also interfere with controls in the vehicle.

OSHA MAINTENANCE AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

OSHA requires weekly maintenance checks to make sure they’re in safe operating conditions free of damage.

Areas to check are:

- brakes, including trailer brake connections, handbrakes and emergency brakes
- tires, horns, lights, reflectors, wipers, defrosters, and or fire extinguishers
- steering system, coupling devices
- operating controls, safety devices, as well as seat belts
- Any defects found must be corrected before the vehicle can be placed back into service.

Help Yourself

Safe work habits are important. Here are three actions you can take to be safe on the job site.

Prepare for safe driving

You must have a valid driver’s license to drive on public roads.

Concentrate on working safely

Whether you are the driver or a passenger, always wear your safety belt. Obey all traffic signs and signals. Risks and shortcuts can lead to serious injury and death.

FINAL WORD

A safe driving program can save lives. Workplace vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death for workers of all ages. The employer program should work to keep the driver and others the road safe. The program must work to change driver attitudes, improve behavior, and increase skills to build a safe culture. Employers should instruct employees on basic safe driving practices.