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Safety Solutions

April is Driving Distracted Awareness Month

By Tom Odegaard, President/Executive Director ESC

How timely it is that Washington State Senate Bill 5656 passed in the Senate on March 10th, and is now scheduled for executive session with the House Committee on Transportation as this goes to press.

SB 5656 is an effort aimed at “**Enhancing public safety by reducing distracted driving incidents caused by the use of personal wireless communications devices.**” In other words it gets tougher on the use of handheld cell phones while driving.

If passed by the Washington House of Representatives and signed by the Governor, SB5656 updates our current laws and brings them into compliance with the requirements needed to be eligible for federal grant funds to combat the problem of distracted driving.

The Washington State Legislature formally recognized that while “cell phones can be a benefit to an individual’s convenience and efficiency,” they are also “a dangerous distraction when driving a vehicle” and “distracted driving is one of the top three causes of fatal teen collisions.”

The following is a summary of what the new law will do:

Any person operating a motor vehicle while holding, reading from, or manually entering information into a personal wireless communications device is guilty of a traffic infraction. (Hands free operation is allowed)

This includes when a vehicle is temporarily stopped at a traffic light or stop sign, but does not include when a vehicle is pulled over to the side of, or off the roadway and stopped in a location where it can safely remain stationary.

Exceptions include: Navigation systems, Contacting emergency services, and Emergency services personnel who use a personal wireless communications device while operating an emergency services vehicle and engaged in the performance of their duties as emergency services personnel.

Holders of an intermediate license or driver’s instruction permit may not use a personal wireless communications device in any manner while operating a motor vehicle.

Penalties also change—the first offense remains \$148 but **second offenses within a five year period would be doubled** and reported to employers or insurance companies.

If passed and signed by Governor Inslee, SB 5656 would take effect on August 1, 2015.



Why take such action? Here are some national statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA):

- **Around 660,000 drivers are using cell phones** or texting while driving **each moment of the day.**
- **25% of teens** respond to a **text** message once or more **every time they drive.**
- **20% of teens and 10% of parents** admit that they **have extended, multi-message text conversations while driving.**
- **5 seconds** is the average time your eyes are off the road **while texting**—at **55mph that’s enough time to cover the length of a football field blindfolded.**
- In 2012: **421,000 people were injured and 3,328 killed in collisions involving distracted driving.**
- **Drivers in their 20’s make up 27% of the distracted drivers in fatal crashes.**



Did You Know that according to NHTSA & VTTI reaching for a moving object increases the risk of a crash or near crash by 9 times. Looking at an external object increases the risk by 3.7 times while reading, applying makeup and dialing a cell phone increase the risk by 3 times. Talking or listening on a cell phone increases the risk by 1.3 times.

Injury Prevention

By Eric Tofte, Director of Training ESC

Most of us know that the major focus of workplace safety is injury prevention. In order to accomplish this, the first thing any business needs to do is a hazard assessment. Actually that is what safety is about—finding hazards and fixing them. Since most of you reading this understand the basics of finding hazards, we want to focus on some basic practices to prevent workplace incidents.

As you search for hazards understand that even though you as the employer have a duty to protect employees, each worker also has a responsibility to stay safe. Make sure your employees are following the practices below:

Be safe in transit. Make sure your employees are driving safely and are operating safe vehicles.

Avoid taking short cuts. It is natural to want to get done on time, but do not short cut safety when it comes to on the job.

Know the weather. Dress and be prepared for cold weather and hot weather.

Make sure to **use proper personal protective equipment (PPE)** and know how to use them.

Injury reduction is a team effort! Help your company accomplish this and please feel free to contact us at Evergreen Safety Council. We would be honored to be part of your safety team.



Distracted Walking

By Eric Tofte, Director of Training ESC

I have learned after all the years I have been in safety, I have not seen everything. This latest safety issue was brought up at the Governor's Safety Conference (although it's been around for a while) - "distracted walking". You heard correctly. There are many people using their cell phones and other devices and not paying attention to where they are walking. In fact, several times over the last couple of years I have been walked into by someone using their device, not paying attention to where they are going, and then they give me a dirty look.

According to Liberty Mutual Insurance, data has revealed that 60 percent of pedestrians do other things while they're walking like texting, emailing, talking on the phone, or listening to music. And even though 70 percent consider those behaviors to be dangerous while walking in a crosswalk—it doesn't stop them.

An article in HRM partners states that "...According to recent studies, 'distracted walking' is a growing safety concern. According to an article this past summer by the Associated Press, reports of distracted walkers treated at emergency rooms has more than quadrupled in the past seven years."

The bottom line is that we all need to pay attention to where we are walking, riding, etc., especially while at work. Another issue is that if employers allow employees to use these devices in this manner, what is their L&I liability for employees injured on the job while using them?

Just think, we humans will always be figuring out new ways to hurt ourselves in the future so we in safety will never rest.

If you need help regarding a safety issue give us a call at Evergreen Safety Council, we can help.

Safety Inspection Management

How safe is your workplace?
Does your workplace have on-going safety inspections?
Do you know what to look for?

Join us to learn how doing regular workplace safety inspections can be an important tool in preventing workplace injuries by identifying potentially hazardous conditions and how they can also help you maintain the bottom line. Participate in the one-day workshop to learn how to best use that tool in safety self-inspections. This workshop will help you to begin a program of self inspections in your own workplace and discuss some of the areas your inspection should cover. This class will go online so be sure to bring your laptop.

SAFETY INSPECTION MANAGEMENT

April 9 – Kirkland WA

1 day workshop | 8 am to 4:30 pm | \$220

MEMBERS SAVE 10% - ASK US HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

SPACE IS LIMITED – SIGN UP TODAY.

Register online at www.esc.org or call 425-814-3868

SAFETY STATISTICS

Driver inattention is the leading factor in most crashes & near crashes—nearly **80% of crashes and 65% of near crashes involved some form of driver inattention.**

Alcohol is involved in around 29% of all crashes and 35% of all fatal crashes.

Excessive speed is the leading cause (approximately 31%) in fatal crashes.

80%

Motorcycle Safety Tips

By Monty E. Lish, Motorcycle and S/TEP Program Manager, ESC

Motorcycles are fun and fuel efficient.

That's not news to anyone who's ridden one. But neither is the fact that they're also more dangerous than a car. Here are some sobering national statistics from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) for 2013:

42% of all motorcycle deaths occurred in single-vehicle crashes;

In 40% of motorcycle single-vehicle fatality crashes the motorcycle rider had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) at or above 0.08%;

48% of motorcycle fatalities involved speeding;

75% of fatalities were not wearing a helmet in States with no mandatory helmet law;

56% of fatalities were not wearing a helmet in States with a partial law (ie..under 18);

6% of fatalities were not wearing a helmet in States with a universal helmet law (like Washington).

Still, many enthusiasts enjoy a lifetime of riding without injury. The key to optimizing your odds is to be prepared and to avoid risks. Below are some tips to help you stay safe on two wheels.

Don't buy more bike than you can handle. When shopping for a bike, start with one that fits you. Choose a model that's easy for you to get on and off the center stand; if it feels too heavy, it probably is.

Invest in antilock brakes. Antilock brakes are a proven lifesaver. IIHS data shows that motorcycles equipped with ABS brakes were 37% less likely to be involved in a fatal crash than bikes without it.

Hone your skills. ESC would not be doing our job if we did not stress the importance of finding and taking a riding course in your area. That is absolutely critical. These courses can teach you the basics, as well as advanced techniques such as how to perform evasive emergency maneuvers. These courses may make you eligible for an insurance discount and they may also save your life.

Use your head. Yes, helmets are an emotional topic for some riders – there are groups that try every year to remove Washington's universal helmet law. Don't listen to them. The facts show the risk. When Texas and Arkansas repealed their helmet laws, they saw a 31% and 21% increase in motorcycle fatalities, respectively. Helmets save lives! In our opinion, a full-face helmet that's approved by the Department of Transportation is the best choice. (Look for a DOT certification sticker on the helmet.)

Wear the right gear. Instead of light clothing, you want gear that will protect you from wind chill, flying bugs and debris, and, yes, road rash if you should slide out. You'll also want effective eye protection; don't rely on eyeglasses or a bike's windscreen – use a helmet visor or goggles. Keep in mind that car drivers who have hit a motorcycle rider often say they just didn't see them, so you may want to choose gear in bright colors.

Be defensive. You aren't the only one on the road – and you have the least amount of protection. You need to be extra alert, especially in this age of epidemic phone use and texting behind the wheel. Keep an eye out for cars making sudden movements. Don't tailgate – keep a safe following distance to ensure you have enough stopping distance and so you have time to react to obstacles in the road.

Eliminating these foreseeable risks is the first major step in dramatically reducing your risks. The weather of late has been great for riding and learning and we wish you all a safe riding season. **Be safe and enjoy!** Check out courses at evergreenmotorcycletraining.org or feel free to contact me, Monty E. Lish, Motorcycle Program Manager, S/TEP Program Manager, Evergreen Safety Council.



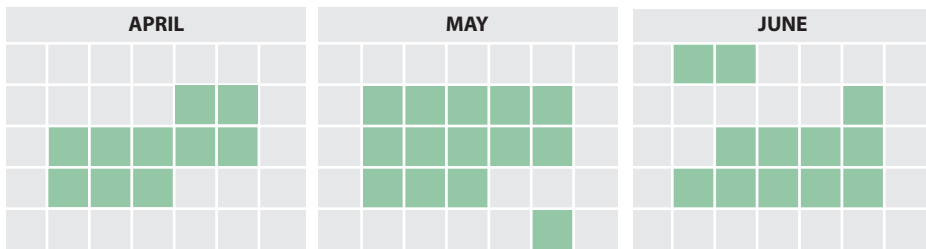


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To REGISTER
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or www.esc.org

Calendar of Events

April

- 9 Safety Inspection Management - Kirkland WA
- 10 First Aid/CPR Certification Open Enrollment - Kirkland WA
- 13-15 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification - Kirkland WA
- 14 Traffic Control Supervisor Recertification - Eugene OR
- 15-17 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification Oregon - Eugene OR
- 16 Traffic Control Supervisor Recertification - Kirkland WA
- 17 Flagger Certification Open Enrollment - Kirkland WA
- 20-21 Forklift Instructor Training - Renton WA
- 22 Forklift Operator Training - Renton WA

May

- 4-8 COSS Safety Certification - Spokane WA
- 5 Traffic Control Supervisor Recertification- Salem OR
- 6-8 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification Oregon - Salem OR
- 11-13 First Aid/CPR Instructor Certification - Kirkland WA
- 11-13 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification Washington - Chehalis WA
- 14 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification Recert - Chehalis WA
- 15 Flagger Certification - Kirkland WA
- 18-19 EverSafe Driving Instructor Certification - Kirkland WA
- 18-19 Forklift Instructor Training - Renton WA
- 20 Forklift Operator Training - Renton WA
- 29 Pilot/Escort Vehicle Operator (P/EVO) - Kirkland WA

June

- 1-2 Flagger Instructor Certification - Kirkland WA
- 12 Flagger Certification - Kirkland WA
- 16-17 Root Cause Analysis Level 1 - Kirkland WA
- 18 Root Cause Analysis Level 2 - Kirkland WA
- 19 Traffic Control Supervisor Recertification - Kirkland WA
- 22-23 Forklift Instructor Training - Renton WA
- 24 Forklift Operator Training - Renton WA
- 24-26 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification - Portland OR