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# Safety Solutions

## On or Off the Job—Vehicle Crashes Have Big Costs for Employers

By Tom Odegaard, President/Executive Director ESC

Many individuals never realize the financial impact of vehicle crashes on employers. However, a report just released by the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS), shows the significant costs to employers that direct crash-related expenses have whether the crash happened on or off the job.

The report, *Cost of Motor Vehicle Crashes to Employers-2015™*, details the costs to employers of traffic crashes occurring on and off the job, and shows an **annual cost of nearly 47.5 billion dollars** in crash-related expenses, including medical care, liability, lost productivity, and property damage.

**Nearly half of this cost resulted from off-the-job vehicle crashes.**

The report shows that **more than 1.6 million work days were lost** due to traffic crashes, with **nearly 90 percent of those days attributed to crashes that occurred off the job**, involving employees and/or their dependents.

- **Speeding resulted in \$8.4 billion** in crash-related expenses,
- **Distracted driving** was close behind, at **\$8.2 billion**,
- **Driving under the influence** of alcohol/drugs resulted in **\$6.0 billion in losses**, and
- **Not wearing a seat belt added \$4.9 billion** to the total.

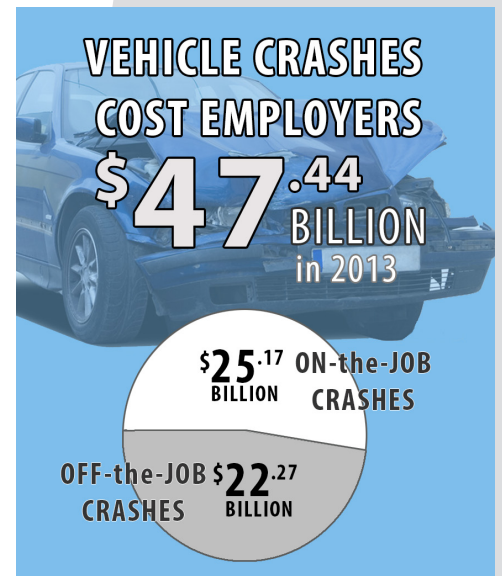
The good news? Developing a proactive traffic safety program is one of the best ways to control costs from workplace vehicle crashes. Besides keeping our roads safe, protecting employees from a motor vehicle crash injury can be a profitable investment of time and resources for any organization.

Proven success has been found in initiating “work-life” programs for all employees, especially programs that use workers as channels for getting traffic safety information to their family and community.

One easy, low cost campaign that has been around for some time is an employee wide seat-belt use campaign. (Get your free toolkit at [2seconds2click.org](http://2seconds2click.org).) Other topics to consider are: trip planning, vehicle safety checks, defensive driving techniques, fatigue management, and driver’s behavior.

Evergreen Safety Council’s EverSafe Driving program addresses all of these topics, and more. The EverSafe Driving program can be presented by an experienced Evergreen Safety Council trainer at your location and customized to match your vehicles and driving situations, or you can send an employee through the Evergreen Safety Council Instructor Development course so they can become qualified to conduct classes for your organization.

Help protect your most valuable resource (your employees) with defensive driving training through ESC’s EverSafe Driving Program. Contact us for more information.





**Did you know?** An estimated **20% of the National Highway System is under construction during peak** construction season, that's 3,000+ work zones. Expect a work zone in one out of every 100 miles traveled. More than 40% of work zone crashes occur in the transition zone before the work area. **1-in-3 work zone crashes nationwide is a rear-end collision.** Every 13 minutes, someone in the U.S. is injured in a work zone crash, and every 10 hours someone in the U.S. is killed in a work zone.

### Workzone Safety Week

National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) is an annual spring campaign held at the start of construction season to encourage safe driving through highway work zones. The key message is for drivers to use extra caution in work zones.

**National Work Zone Awareness Week 2016, April 11-15**

*By Eric Tofte, Director of Training ESC*

With summer coming so is the road maintenance time. You know...when everywhere you drive there is some road work in your way so you can't turn in to get your coffee?? We know that this is very frustrating, but they are there trying to improve the roadway to make your drive more comfortable and safe.

With that said, as you drive through a work zone, do you think about the safety of the work crew or are they just in your way? As you drive through a work zone, here are some safety tips from the Federal Highway Administration:

- Stay alert and minimize distractions - dedicate your full attention to the roadway.
- Keep your headlights on.
- Pay attention to the road.
- Merge into the proper lane and merge well before you reach the lane closure.
- Don't tailgate.
- Obey the posted speed limit.
- Change lanes safely.
- Follow instructions from Flaggers.
- Expect the unexpected, and
- Most importantly **Be Patient!**

#### DO NOT...

- Speed up or slow down significantly while going through a work zone.
- Slow down to look at the construction work being done.
- Resume normal speed until after you emerge completely out of the work zone area.
- Tailgate. (Yep- we said it twice) Most accidents within a work zone are rear-end collisions.
- Change lanes within a work zone.

Most states have instituted new laws regarding work zones—traffic fines double in work zones, and often you cannot reduce, suspend or waive these fines. Injuring or killing a roadway worker may include jail time and license suspension.

So slowing down and paying attention can not only reduce your own stress, it can save a life and it can save drive time, money, and possibly your freedom.



### This Ongoing Operation Can Reduce Accidents and Hazards, and Improve Morale

*By Eric Tofte, Director of Training ESC*

With the changing times of the season there usually is some "safety" week dealing with any sort of safety issue. Well there is one safety issue that we feel needs to be addressed all the time and that is Basic Housekeeping.

Effective housekeeping will eliminate some workplace hazards and help get a job done safely and properly. Poor housekeeping can frequently contribute to accidents by hiding hazards. If the sight of debris, clutter and spills is accepted as normal, then other more serious health and safety hazards may be taken for granted.

Housekeeping is not just cleanliness. It includes keeping work areas neat and orderly; maintaining halls and floors free of slip or trip hazards; and removing of waste materials (e.g., paper, cardboard) and other fire hazards from work areas. It also requires paying attention to important details such as the layout of the whole workplace, aisle marking, the adequacy of storage facilities, and maintenance. Good housekeeping is also a basic part of accident and fire prevention.

Effective housekeeping is an ongoing operation: it is not a hit-and-miss cleanup done occasionally. Housekeeping order is "maintained" not "achieved." Cleaning and organization must be done regularly, not just at the end of the shift. Integrating housekeeping into jobs can help ensure this is done regularly.

The final addition to any housekeeping program is inspection. It is the only way to check for deficiencies in the program so that changes can be made. Consider documentation and using checklists for inspecting offices and manufacturing facilities to track progress.

**— GOOD HOUSEKEEPING —**

**PROMOTES SAFETY**

**DO YOUR PART**

## SAFETY STATISTICS

**660,000 drivers are using their cell phones or electronic devices at any given daylight moment across America while driving.**

A number that has held steady since 2010.

**660  
THOUSAND**

## April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

*By Tom Odegaard, President/Executive Director ESC*

**What is Distracted Driving?** Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. Whether you are texting, using your phone, eating, drinking, or even looking at a map—ALL distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety.

Because text messaging/emailing requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the most alarming distraction and has drawn the most attention on both a national as well as a state level.

For the 8th consecutive year, the **AAA Foundation** has gathered information in an effort to measure and benchmark the attitudes and behaviors of American drivers. The net result for the **2015 Traffic Safety Culture Index** shows that while one in eight drivers do **not** perceive any sort of social disapproval from others regarding texting or emailing while driving they also think:

### Texting or emailing while driving

is a serious threat to safety (per 77.4%), and 80.6% say it is totally unacceptable.

However, 42.3% have read a text or email while driving in the past 30 days and nearly 1/3 (31.3%) typed one.

### Is it okay to use a cell phone while driving?

More than 2/3rds (68.6%) say use of handheld cell phones by drivers is unacceptable, but 63.1% say hands-free use is acceptable;

### Or should they be banned?

88 % support banning texting while driving;  
70% support a hand-held cell phone ban while driving, and Those for a total cell phone ban equal 42% .

In general they also found that younger drivers were more likely to self-report engaging in distracting behaviors behind the wheel, more likely to find these behaviors acceptable, and less likely to support legislation aimed at curbing distractions.

**We encourage our members and clients to take the following steps with your employees and encourage them to take the message home and lead by example:**

- Educate your employees on the dangers of distracted driving;
- Implement a policy regarding distracted driving – then enforce it;
- If you need more information, contact ESC and see links to right.



From the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) at [Distraction.gov](http://Distraction.gov):

- **3,154 = motor vehicle fatalities involving distracted drivers nationwide, 2013**
- **In WA, 2013- 28% of traffic fatalities involved distracted drivers—That's 120 of 436**
- **153.3 billion text messages are sent in the US per month**
- **At any given moment during the day, 660,000 drivers are using their cell phones or electronic devices across the US while driving.**
- **5 seconds - the average time your eyes are off the road while texting. At 55mph, that's a football field you just travelled blind.**
- **49% of adults say they've been passengers when the driver was texting;**
- **49% of drivers under 35 text while driving**
- **27% of the distracted drivers in fatal crashes are in their 20s**
- **71% of young people say they have sent a text while driving; 78% say they have read a text while driving;**
- **10% of teen drivers involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the crash. This age group has the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted.**

More details on these studies and others can be found online:  
AAA: [www.aaafoundation.org/2015-traffic-safety-culture-index](http://www.aaafoundation.org/2015-traffic-safety-culture-index)  
NHTSA: [www.distraction.gov/stats-research-laws/facts-and-statistics.html](http://www.distraction.gov/stats-research-laws/facts-and-statistics.html)  
IIHS: [www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/t/distracted-driving/topicoverview](http://www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/t/distracted-driving/topicoverview)  
NETS: [trafficsafety.org/safety/risk/distracted-driving-resources](http://trafficsafety.org/safety/risk/distracted-driving-resources)

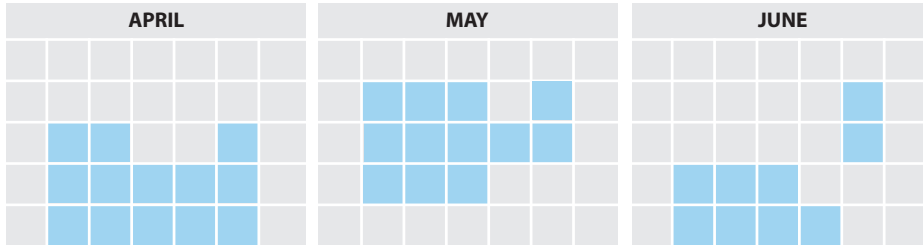


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**To REGISTER**  
**1-800-521-0778**  
 or [www.esc.org](http://www.esc.org)

# Calendar of Events

**April**

- 11 - 12 P/EVO Instructor Certification - Kirkland WA
- 15 Flagger Certification - Kirkland WA
- 18 - 20 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification - Chehalis WA
- 21 Traffic Control Supervisor Recertification - Chehalis WA
- 22 Flagger Instructor Recertification - Chehalis WA
- 25 Traffic Control Supervisor Recertification - Portland OR
- 25 - 26 Forklift Instructor Training - Renton WA
- 25 - 29 COSS Safety Certification - Pasco WA
- 26 - 28 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification - Portland OR
- 27 Forklift Operator Training - Renton WA

**May**

- 9 - 11 First Aid/CPR Instructor Certification - Kirkland WA
- 13 First Aid/CPR Certification - Kirkland WA
- 16 EverSafe Driving Instructor Recertification - Kirkland WA
- 16 Traffic Control Supervisor Recertification - Salem OR
- 17 - 18 Root Cause Analysis: Level 1 - Kirkland WA
- 17 - 19 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification - Salem OR
- 19 Root Cause Analysis: Level 2 - Kirkland WA
- 20 Flagger Certification - Kirkland WA
- 23 - 24 Forklift Instructor Training - Renton WA
- 23 - 25 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification - Kirkland WA
- 25 Forklift Operator Training - Renton WA

**June**

- 10 Pilot/Escort Vehicle Operator (P/EVO) - Kirkland WA
- 17 Flagger Certification - Kirkland WA
- 20 - 21 Forklift Instructor Training - Renton WA
- 20 - 22 Flagger Instructor Certification - Kirkland WA
- 22 Forklift Operator Training - Renton WA
- 27 - 29 Safe Supervisor - Kirkland WA
- 27 Traffic Control Supervisor Recertification - Portland OR
- 28 - 30 Traffic Control Supervisor Certification - Portland OR