



FASC Safety Council News

Florida Association of Safety Councils - Newsletter

March & April, 2003 ~ Take care! Safety is no accident!

FASC provides a forum for Florida Safety Councils to examine and act on issues impacting driving, occupational and public safety. FASC develops safety education programs available to member Councils individually or collectively. Visit the FASC Website at: www.safety.org

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Contact A Safety Council Near You!

Cell Phones... New research. New questions.

New research explains, specifically, how cell phone conversations while driving become a potentially dangerous distraction. A study, by researchers David Strayer, Frank Drews and William Johnston at the University of Utah, titled "Cell Phone Use Can Lead to Inattention Blindness Behind the Wheel", shows that conversing on cell phones while driving disrupts the driver's attention to the visual environment, leading to what the authors call "inattention blindness", or the inability to recognize objects encountered in the driver's visual field.

The authors suggest that even when participants are directing their gaze at objects in the driving environment, they may fail to "see" them when they are using a cell phone because attention is directed elsewhere.

The issue of driver distractions caused by cellular phones becomes increasingly important as cell phone use becomes more prevalent in American life. According to studies conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), some form of driver distraction is a contributing factor in 20 to 30 percent of all crashes.

There are two theories currently being used in regard to employer liability for their employees' actions: 1) the employer expects employees to be available by phone and encourages employees to do business this way and/or 2) the employer knows or perhaps even should know, that its employees are doing so and fails to take any steps to ensure that they are doing so safely.

In light of possible liability on the company's side of the equation, companies should consider developing company policy addressing the use of cell phones and other devices while driving.



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OSHA Happenings

Six Publications Revised and Updated:

OSHA recently updated six existing publications on various topics. They include: OSHA Inspections; Excavations; Materials handling and Storage; Job hazard Analysis; Lockout/Tagout; and Construction Industry Digest. Each publication highlights key elements of a specific standard/regulation or general occupational safety and health issue.



High-Rise Building Emergencies:

OSHA has published a new fact sheet for high-rise building employers describing actions employers should take during emergencies requiring evacuation or an emergency in which they should find themselves trapped. A high-rise building is one greater than 75 feet in height where the building height is measured from the lowest level of fire department vehicle access to the floor of the highest occupiable story. The fact sheet is available at: http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/evacuating-highrise-factsheet.pdg.



Most Frequently Cited Standards List:

For the first time in recent years, Hazard Communication has dropped to number two on OSHA's "Most Frequently Cited Standards List." The following list reflects the year 2002. In order they are:

1. Scaffolding/Construction
2. Hazard Communication
3. Fall Protection/Construction
4. Respiratory Protection
5. Lockout/Tagout
6. Electrical Wiring
7. Machine Guarding
8. Powered Industrial Trucks
9. Electrical Systems
10. Mechanical Power



OSHA's top most "Willful" violations are #1—Protection Systems/Excavation; #2—Scaffolding/Construction; and #3—Fall Protection/Construction.

Scaffolding/Construction and Fall Protection/Construction are also the top two of the top ten most *serious* violations. <<

NIOSH Study - Forklifts

Do forklift operators see what's in their path? Probably not, according to a NIOSH (National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health) study that found the following factors increased the likelihood that a forklift operator would back up without having a full view of the path of travel:

- One tends to get a stiff neck from turning around.
 - Even when one does turn around, s/he cannot turn 180 degrees from the normal driver position.
 - One must turn from one side to the other and, thus, may miss important visual information from the blind spots.
 - One might be watching obstructions or other problematic conditions on one side of the truck or load.
 - While reversing and turning the forklift, an operator must look forward to ensure the load does not swing and strike a person or object.
 - A worker may make several maneuvers of backing and going forward, and may only check for pedestrians before the first such maneuver.
 - When going around a corner, an operator may go too fast or fail to stop and check for traffic.
 - Operator may be instructed to hurry.
 - Operator may be on incentive pay system.
 - Operator may fail to establish and maintain communication with workers in the environment.
 - Workers fail to heed warnings of forklift operators.
 - Narrow aisles, crowded aisles, blind intersections and doors, and ambient noise camouflaging the truck's noise interact with lack of effective communication among workers who share the same general space and/or tasks.
- Runover injuries caused by forklifts traveling in reverse can be avoided. Inform your employees of these 'human factors' when driving and especially backing a forklift. Your local Safety Council can provide your forklift drivers with safety instruction and certification. <<



For further information or assistance, contact:

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WWW.REGULATIONS.GOV

Your one-stop site to comment on federal regulations. www.regulations.gov is the U.S. Government website that makes it easier for you to participate in Federal rulemaking.

On this site, you can find, review, and submit comments on Federal documents that are open for comment and published in the *Federal Register*, the Government's legal newspaper.

To find *Federal Register* documents currently open for comment, please use the GO buttons on the top of every page. Either put a search word in the keyword search box or select an agency from the drop-down list in the 'Find Regulations' box. <<



Did you post your injury log on Feb. 1st?

February 1st, 2003 was the deadline for employers to post a record of 2002's work-related injuries and illnesses. If your workplace has more than ten employees and you are in a low-hazard industry, you are required to post the OSHA 300 summary log and leave it posted until April 30. The log is a summary of all work-related injuries and illnesses that occurred in your workplace during 2002.

The person certifying the log must be an owner, an officer of the corporation, the highest ranking company official working at the establishment, or the immediate supervisor of the highest ranking company official working at the establishment. Employers must keep their workplace injury and illness records for 5 years. In the case of business sale, the records must be transferred to the new owner.

For more information about the OSHA 300 log and OSHA regulations concerning the recording of work-related injuries and illnesses, including a list of industries that are exempt from the annual posting requirement, visit <http://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/index.html>. <<

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If your company is considering a policy, be sure it emphasizes "safety first" and limits use while driving. Employees should be made aware of current state laws—many states have considered legislation to limit cell phone use and some states, such as New York, have passed legislation prohibiting cell phone use while driving. Florida has considered such legislation.

Admittedly, cell phone limiting policies may be tough to enforce, but right now it's the only protection available to employers. As with any employment policy, training your employees is as important as having the policy.

SOME TIPS FOR SAFE CELLULAR PHONE USE

- Make safe driving your first priority:
- Buckle up
- Keep your hands on the wheel
- Keep your eyes on the road
- Position your phone where it is easy to see and reach
- Familiarize yourself with the phones' operation while the car is parked
- Use a hands-free microphone while driving
- Use the speed dial feature for frequently called numbers
- Pull over and dial manually
- Never take notes while driving. Pull off the road if you must read or write.
- Use voice mail to pick up your calls if it is inconvenient or unsafe to answer the car phone.
- Use common sense.

(These tips for safe cellular phone use were provided by the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association)

Off-job drinking causes job injuries/claims.

Drinking off the job can affect your safety on the job. A study of railway workers by the University of California at Berkeley showed those who had 10 drinks or more each week were more likely to file claims for injuries at work. <<



For further information or assistance, contact:

Safety Council of Palm Beach County

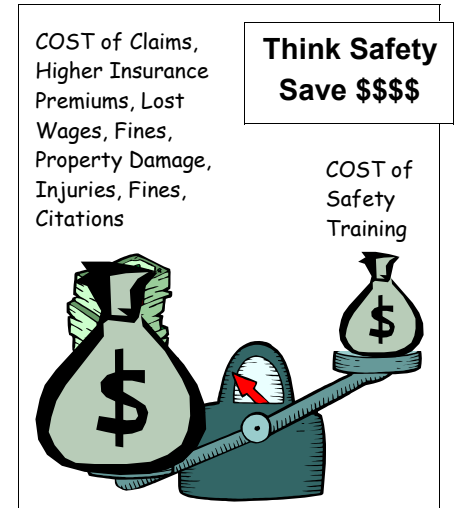
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Penny Wise - Pound Foolish!

So the economy isn't the greatest! So you think maybe you can cut your budget by cutting the safety budget? Bad choice. Don't cut that budget. Think safety. Think saving. **Safety training cuts overall cost!** Fines, OSHA citations, employee injuries (and subsequent days off work to recuperate), property damage and injury claims will all cost more in the long run than safety training. Protect the lives of your employees. Protect your company.

Workers' compensation premiums are expected to go up in April of this year on an average of 13.7 percent according to an article in a recent article in the St. Petersburg Times. Rate increases were recently approved. Changes have been proposed that include making companies with poor safety records pay more. Florida rates are the second highest in the country according to the article.

Safety training at your local Safety Council is economical and timely. On-sites can be arranged. Train an in-house person to train others. Call your local Safety Council. Contact information can be found on the front page of this newsletter. Don't hesitate. Stay safe. <<



The *Safety Council News* is published six times a year to keep business and industry informed of the Florida Association of Safety Council's activities and safety and health news and developments. NOTE: The information herein was obtained from sources believed reliable and the Association has exercised reasonable care to assure its accuracy. However, the Florida Association of Safety Councils does not guarantee that the contents of the *Safety Council News* are correct and statements from other sources do not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the Association.



PSM Spring Promotion

If you sign up a new enrollees in our PSM Program you (or they) will receive a free coupon for a PSM course, valued at \$65.00!

This Florida Association of Safety Council's program, Principles of Safety Management, is designed to educate the individual on current safety regulations, standards, practices and procedures for the workplace. Courses are designed to help the student achieve improvement in safety performance on the job. Graduates receive a plaque once requirements are met.

- Each course is just half-day format. Tuition is \$65.00 per course, with a one time \$50.00 enrollment fee. Ten core courses are required, and two to three elective courses. You can take up to three years to complete the program.

Safety Council
of Palm Beach County, Inc.

Call 561-689-4733 Ext. 12 to Enroll