

Fact Sheet: Roadway Crashes Impact Employers

Each year thousands of people are injured or killed in the United States due to predictable and preventable traffic crashes. Driving is something that almost every employee does—whether it's business-related travel during the workday, commuting to and from work, or during off-duty hours. But regardless of when, where, or why an employee is behind the wheel, when a crash occurs, there is an impact on their place of business.

Preventing traffic crashes by encouraging the use of safe driving practices will save immeasurable pain and suffering and drive down the costs of doing business while decreasing company overhead. While safety is always the bottom line, eliminating crashes also makes good business sense.

With 91 percent of employees commuting to and from work and 18 percent of all motor vehicle trips being work-related, employers have an opportunity to make a difference on the nation's roadways by improving roadway safety in their own place of business and in their community and surrounding neighborhoods.

Risk of Being Involved in a Crash

In 2006, there were 6 million crashes in the United States that resulted in 42,642 fatalities and just under 2.6 million people injuries. More than 94 percent of the 11 million vehicles involved in motor vehicle crashes were passenger cars or light trucks. (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 2007)

- The most dangerous part of the day for any employee is the time they spend in their vehicle.

Every 5 seconds a crash occurs.

Every 7 seconds a property damage crash occurs.

Every 10 seconds there is a traffic-related injury.

Every 2 minutes there is an alcohol-related injury.

Every 12 minutes in the United States, someone dies in a traffic crash.

Every 31 minutes an alcohol-related crash fatality occurs.

Every 113 minutes a pedestrian is killed in a crash.

Every 4 days an employee dies in a work-related crash.

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death on-the job. One in four work-related deaths are due to a traffic-related trauma. (OSHA, 2005)

Commuter Profile

The average commuter spends about 26 minutes traveling approximately 15 miles one-way to work.

- About 9 out of 10 employees commute from home to work
- 81% use their personal vehicle
- 86% drive alone
- About 3.3 million Americans are "stretch commuters" traveling 50 miles or more one way to get to work.

(Bureau of Transportation Statistics Omnibus Household, 2004)

Cost of Crashes to Employers

The average cost of on-the-job motor vehicle crash to employers (NHTSA, 2003). The economic burden of traffic crashes on employers: costs by state and industry and by alcohol and restraint use. [Publication DOT HS 809 682]

\$16,500/crash (all crashes)

\$76,300/injury (all injury)

\$0.158/ vehicle-miles traveled

\$73,750/nonfatal injury

\$504,400/fatal injury

The total economic cost of motor vehicle crashes to employers in 2000 was \$60 billion with on-the-job crashes costing \$40 billion and off-the-job crashes \$20 billion.

Fact Sheet: Roadway Crashes Impact Employers (continued)

Crash Causation

One out of nine licensed drivers will have a crash annually. The 100-Car Naturalistic Driving Study conducted by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI) provides insight into the odds of being involved in a motor vehicle crash for several “high-risk” driving behaviors.

- The odds of being involved in a crash or near crash are double when drivers are inattentive and look away from the roadway for 2 seconds or longer.
- The odds of being involved in a crash or near crash are almost tripled when driving significantly faster than surrounding traffic.
- The odds of being involved in a crash or near crash are double when driving aggressively.
- The odds of being involved in a crash or near crash are almost tripled when driving drowsy. (NHTSA, VTTI, 2006)

Driver error contributes to more than 90 percent of all motor vehicle crashes. (NHTSA)

Other contributing factors:

- 35% - Environmental Factors
- 9% - Vehicle Factors (Indiana Tri-Level Study, 197x)

Four types of collisions (intersection collisions, rear-end collisions, road departure collisions, and lane change and merge collisions) account for nearly 80 percent of highway crashes. (USDOT, 1998)

“Road rudeness,” or tailgating, abrupt lane changes, excessive speed, and passing on the shoulder are a factor in three out of five highway collisions. (NHTSA, 2004)

More than 43 percent of all fatal motor vehicle crashes involved a vehicle drifting out of its lane or off the road. (NHTSA, 2001)

The following are compelling background facts and quotes that support this year’s DSWW campaign theme. “Take Charge of YOUR Driving Behavior. Reduce YOUR Crash Risk. Avoid High-Risk Driving Mistakes.”

Being Inattentive

- Distracted driving accounts for 25 to 30% of all traffic crashes, causing an estimated 4,000 to 4,800 traffic crashes daily. (NHTSA, 2006)
- Eighty percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes involved some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the event. The most common distraction for drivers is the use of cell phones. (NHTSA, VTTI, 2006)
- Multitasking is a contributing factor in 93 percent of crashes and minor collisions. (Consumer Reports, 2007)

Following Too Closely

- Rear-end collisions account for approximately 1.8 million crashes annually or about 25 percent of all police reported collisions. (National Transportation Safety Board-NTSB, 2001)

Fact Sheet: Roadway Crashes Impact Employers

(continued)

- A driver will brake about 50,000 times per year to avoid crashing into a vehicle in front of them. (NTSB, 2001)
- It takes the average driver 1.64 seconds to perceive and react to a roadway hazard. (American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials)

Traveling At Improper Speeds

- Speeding is a major cause of crashes and injuries; a contributing factor in one third of all fatal crashes, 13,113 lives in 2005. (NHTSA, 2005)
- When speed increases from 40 to 60 mph, the energy released in a crash more than doubles. (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety-IIHS, 2002)
- The majority of drivers in the United States consider speeding and other forms of unsafe driving to be a major threat to their safety. (NHTSA)

Ignoring Traffic Signs and Signals

- Failure to comply with traffic control devices is the cause of 22 percent of all urban crashes. (IIHS)
- Each year more than 800 people die in red light running crashes and 165,000 are injured. About half of these deaths are innocent pedestrians and occupants in other vehicles hit by red light runners. (IHS, 2005)
- Red-light running crashes exact a toll in excess of \$12 billion on our economy, including medical expenses and time lost from work. (FHWA, 2001)
- Many collisions and near crashes occur when drivers ignore or fail to respond to traffic signs and signals. Intersections are among the most dangerous locations on U.S. roadways. (FHWA)

Backing Up Unsafely

- Backing incidents represent a significant percentage, 25 to 30 percent, of all preventable crashes.
- Vehicle backing incidents account for more than 10 percent of all auto liability incidents. (Liberty Mutual, 2003)

Buckling Up

- Regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes.
- When worn correctly, seat belts reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants by 45 percent – and by 60 percent in pickup trucks, SUVs and mini-vans.
- Nearly one in five Americans still fail to regularly wear their seat belts when driving or riding in a motor vehicle. (NHTSA, 2007)