



Tailgate/Toolbox Safety Training

Safety Services Company-Safety Meeting Division, PO Box 6408 Yuma, AZ 85366-6408 Toll Free (866) 204-4786



Company Name: _____ Job Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

Topic 318: Cell Phones and Text Messaging While Driving

Introduction: Today's fast paced society means instant response to any issues someone may have. To help us in our daily travels, communications companies are making it easier for us to keep in touch with those around us. With just a press of a button, we can instantly be connected to an employee on the job-site, the boss's office, the site-inspector, just about anyone we know can send and receive phone calls anywhere and "text" us when the need arises. Unfortunately, many people utilize driving time to catch up on any business that can be handled over the cell phone, or by text messaging. Not only is this very dangerous, but in many states, it is illegal or in legislative phases to becoming illegal, with mandates being made for at least "hands free" phone equipment. This is being enacted due to the alarming increase of accidents caused by drivers being distracted while on the phone or "texting".

A study at the University of Utah reached the following conclusions about the distraction of cell phone use while driving:

- **Talking** to someone who is not present is a greater distraction than talking to a passenger, or listening to the radio.
- **Driving performance** while talking on a cell phone is impaired at comparable levels to, or worse than, driving with a blood alcohol level of .08, which is the legal limit in most states.
- **In dense traffic**, cell phone users were on average, 20 % slower to respond to sudden hazards than other drivers.
- **Cell phone users** were about twice as likely to rear-end a braking car in front of them.
- **While driving, cell phone** users are extracting about 50 % of the visual information that non-cell phone drivers are processing.



NOTE: There are many other studies from various sources concerning cell phone use while driving. According to one study: "the use of a cell phone while driving increases the risk of having an accident four times." Another study found that using a cell phone in a vehicle increases the risk of becoming involved in an accident by 34 %. Though they may not agree as to the level of impairment caused by this distraction, they have all agreed that it is a great distraction and an unwise practice.

In order to stay a safe driver while using your cell phone or "texting", use common sense:

- **Pull off** to the side of the road or into a parking lot to talk on the phone, or text.
- **Use a "hands-free" set** even if it is not required in your state.
- **If you have** passengers in the vehicle with you, let someone else make the call for you.
- **If none of the above** is possible and you must make a call, keep the conversation brief and hang up or simply drop the phone if you encounter a risky driving situation. Safe driving takes precedence over phone etiquette; you can explain later.
- **Maintain even greater** distance between your vehicle and other vehicles while talking on the phone.
- **Do not dial** the phone while in traffic. Wait for a stop or pull safely off the road.
- **Keep conversations short.** Do not use the cell phone while driving for social visiting or other unnecessary tasks that would be better taken care of later when it does not endanger your and/or others life.



Conclusion: Psychology studies show that whether talking with a passenger or someone on the phone, people are less able to recall the details of a conversation carried on while driving. So, in addition to your physical health, it might not be wise to discuss business or personal relationships on the phone while driving. Taking into account run-ins with law enforcement for driving erratically, it would seem the best option to choose, would be to turn your cell phone off. This would be the safest decision for you and your fellow commuters.

Work Site Review

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: _____

Personnel Safety Violations: _____

Employee Signatures:

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

Foreman/Supervisor's Signature: _____

These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.