

DRIVING AWARENESS

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I recently read a report that indicated, 80% of all vehicle accidents were caused by distraction. It is so easy to become distracted and it only takes a second for an accident to take place.

Distraction comes in many forms including:

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| * Daydreaming | * Taking your eyes off the road |
| * Personal Problems | * Other Drivers |
| * Cell Phones | * Fatigue |

Staying focused while driving can be difficult for any of us. It is easy to start thinking about other matters while driving. In fact, 25 to 30% of all truck drivers are daydreaming at any one time. The lights are on but nobody is home. If anything out of the ordinary happens, you will need to come back to reality before you can react. Often times it is too late. I have talked to a number of individuals that were in vehicle accidents, who couldn't remember what they were thinking of right before the accident.

Taking your eyes off the road even for an instant can spell trouble. Cars in front of you may stop suddenly, cars may pull out in front of you, the light may change, your vehicle may veer into the other lanes or someone may walk into the path of your vehicle. Any number of bad things may happen and unfortunately do.

Personal problems can cause you to worry and lose concentration on your driving. Other drivers will always be a problem. Unfortunately, we share the highways with all kinds of other drivers. People reading maps, talking on cell phones, talking to other passengers and even putting on make-up while driving are only a few of the problems created by other drivers.

Cell phones are a serious cause for distraction. It is hard to do two things at once, especially when driving at close quarters in traffic. Almost everyone today uses their phones while driving creating serious dangers for themselves and others. Fatigue robs the body of its ability to focus and react.

Also, driving safely is critical to preventing vehicle accidents and employee injuries and deaths.

- * It starts with maintaining a safety attitude at all times. This means not putting yourself in situations that could cause an accident. Maintaining a good safety attitude will go a long way to ensure safe driving.
- * Get plenty of rest. If you feel yourself getting drowsy, pull over and take a break. A quick rest break can revitalize you.
- * Keep your eyes on the road at all times. Don't be looking around or counting the cars. Watch traffic patterns in front of you.
- * Don't daydream, stay in the present. This is critical to safe driving and avoiding becoming another victim.
- * Don't talk on the cell phone or try to read a map while driving. Pull over and take care of business then proceed.
- * Stay under control, don't let other drivers upset you or cause you to do something you will regret. Always expect other drivers to do something stupid, they won't disappoint you.
- * Practice defensive driving, be aware of dangerous situations and take preventative action to avoid them or reduce the danger.
- * Over 40,000 people a year die in Motor Vehicle Accidents. Most of these accidents are preventable and unnecessary. Take your driving serious, stay alert and don't allow yourself to become distracted. The accident you prevent, could be your own.

If you have any safety related questions or need help with your Safety Program, please give me a call at 1-800-356-1274.