



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 21, 2008

Traffic Crashes Most Costly of Workplace Accidents

Every 12 minutes, someone in the United States is killed in a motor vehicle crash. Nonfatal injuries occur at a much faster rate: one every 10 seconds. And of course not all the vehicle accidents – one every five seconds – result in injuries or death.

Many of the horrendous crashes or minor fender benders that occur each day are work related, resulting in workers' compensation claims and lost work days. They cost employers billions of dollars annually. In fact, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of workplace fatalities, and when you include the workers' compensation and property damages costs, motor vehicle crashes become the most costly of all workplace accidents, according to Occupational Safety and Health Administration data.

The National Institute of Occupational Health and Safety encourages safety managers to “incorporate information about sharing the road safely with trucks and other large commercial motor vehicles into driver education courses and workplace driver training programs.”

To reduce the risk of work-related motor vehicle crashes, OSHA suggests that employers ensure all their employees who need to drive on the job are taught how to drive defensively and safely. OSHA also recommends companies' driving policies should:

- Enforce mandatory use of seat belts
- Ensure that employees who drive on the job have valid licenses
- Set policies to comply with states' drivers' licensing and child labor laws
- Incorporate fatigue management into safety programs
- Schedule workers who drive to do so during regular hours
- Assign driving-related tasks to responsible drivers
- Provide fleet vehicles that offer the highest possible levels of occupant protection
- Training employees properly who need to operate specialized vehicles
- Offer periodic vision screening and general physicals for employees whose primary job requirement is to drive

Employees also need to take responsibility, OSHA adds. Workers should:

- Always wear safety restraints
- Avoid using cell phones

- Avoid other activities such as eating, drinking, smoking or adjusting accessory vehicle controls while driving

SCF Arizona, the state's largest provider of workers' compensation insurance has programs and informational materials that promote safety and defensive driving to its policyholders. "We have hundreds of employees driving on business every day" says Ray Diaz, SCF Arizona Loss Control Consultant. "So we strive to set an example to our policyholders by driving safely, whether on company business or not."

For more information on vehicle safety, driving safety and defensive driving, contact an SCF Arizona Loss Control Consultant at 602.631.2000.