

SafetyNETS

INFORMATION TO HELP KEEP YOUR EMPLOYEES SAFE ON THE ROAD

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MINNESOTA NETWORK OF EMPLOYERS FOR TRAFFIC SAFETY—SUMMER 2005

Free Resources for Drive Safely Work Week

Gear up now for national Drive Safely Work Week (DSWW), October 3–7. This year's focus is distracted driving, and Minnesota NETS, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety, and the Minnesota Wireless Foundation will team to provide a strong statewide public education campaign.



(see next page) in your company's newsletter or other interoffice publication. Incorporate the campaign's cartoon or safety ad.

- Display the campaign poster in a central, high-traffic location.
- Enlist your CEO to officially designate October 3–7, 2005 as Drive Safely Work Week (see the sample proclamation on the NETS Web site).

How can your company plan a successful Drive Safely Work Week? Make use of the numerous free resources available on the national NETS Web site at <http://www.trafficsafety.org/05download.asp>. They include fact sheets, a newsletter article, payroll stuffers, daily announcements, graphics and planning tools, including the corporate plan of action below. For Minnesota-specific information, contact Lisa Kons at 651-228-7330/800-444-9150, e-mail: kons@mnsafetycouncil.org.

Corporate plan of action

Establish a DSWW planning committee. Recruit a small team of employees representing various aspects and departments of the organization, who will be responsible for planning and implementing the campaign. The planning committee should secure senior level commitment and management support for the campaign. Each team member should be assigned specific tasks before and throughout the duration of the campaign. Together they should review the campaign materials and use this plan of action as a guide to plan the week's events.

Promote the campaign in advance. To help raise awareness before the week of the campaign:

- Publish the campaign's newsletter article, or a fact sheet

Make every day count. Incorporate different DSWW materials during each day of the workweek. Distribute the "Drive Safely" campaign ribbons at the beginning of the week and encourage employees to show their support for the campaign's safe driving message by wearing them throughout the week. Distribute one fact sheet per day and supplement it with a DSWW daily campaign announcement or safety ad. Use the campaign quiz during the middle of the week to keep the momentum going. Finally, reward your employees for their participation at the end of the week with a small incentive.

Utilize all of your communication outlets to get the word out. All of the campaign's workplace service announcements can be tailored to different media, including voicemail, e-mail, your company intranet and company newsletter.

Schedule a presentation for your employees. Use the DSWW PowerPoint™ Presentation to explain DSWW to your employees and the importance of their safety behind the wheel. Liven the presentation by incorporating the DSWW quiz.

Driver FOCUS

Be Ready. Be Set. Be Focused.

Because employees spending more time on the road are trying to remain productive while behind the wheel. Because distracted drivers react more slowly to roadway conditions, significantly reducing their margin of safety. Because activities that take a driver's mind away from driving are just as risky as taking one's eyes off the road. Because driving requires your undivided attention: your mind on the task, your hands on the wheel. Because you never know what you may encounter on the roadway.

Driver distraction occurs when a driver's attention is diverted away from the primary task of operating the vehicle by activities, objects, or events inside or outside the vehicle; or by factors such as emotional stress or preoccupation with other thoughts. While driver distraction is not new, as traffic congestion worsens and as more in-vehicle wireless communication and infotainment devices become available, the rate of distraction-related crashes will increase.



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that 20 to 30 percent of the nearly 3 million crashes each year are attributable to distracted driving. Protect your passengers and yourself by being a focused driver and then be alert for other motorists engaged in risky driving behaviors, including distracted, drowsy, aggressive and impaired driving.

- Get plenty of rest before getting behind the wheel. Driving drowsy or fatigued greatly reduces your ability to focus on your driving.
- Inspect your vehicle before each trip. A well-maintained vehicle can make the difference between a crash and a near-miss.
- Always wear your seat belt. It is your best defense when involved in a crash.
- Expect the unexpected and anticipate the bad decision of other drivers.
- Be alert for distracted motorists and steer clear of them.
- Next time you slam on the brakes to avoid a crash, recognize that you may be driving distracted. You may be doing more things behind the wheel than you can safely manage.
- Keep a safe following distance and maintain a safe speed. Always leave enough space between you and the vehicle in front of you for any last minute maneuvers.
- Avoid aggressive driving behaviors. These reckless behaviors can divert driver attention and create hazardous situations on the roadway.
- Never drive impaired. Alcohol or drugs affect a person's ability to make crucial driving decisions.
- Share the road safely. Be alert to other roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists and large trucks.

Types of Driver Distraction

- Psychomotor—Physical activities that cause drivers to take their hands off the wheel.
- Cognitive—Activities that take the driver's mind off the road.
- Outside the Vehicle—Roadside events or activities that take the driver's eyes off the road.



Making Minnesota A Safer Place To Live
Chapter of the National Safety Council