



Ask the Expert: Tips for Traffic Safety Programs in the Workplace

When Steve Brotzler, our traffic safety consultant, goes into workplaces he finds that everyone has their own pet peeve about behavior on the roads, whether it's putting on makeup, red light running or cell phone use. But while employee concerns run the gamut, there is one action Steve recommends to employers as the most effective step they can take to help their workers prevent traffic-related injuries.

"The most important thing an employer can do is to promote a seat belt use campaign," he said. "Include training, posters and brochures, and possibly a seat belt contest. Every time I give a safety talk, several individuals will approach me with seat belt survivor stories." He notes that safety experts believe we can cut the death rate by almost half if we can succeed at getting everyone to buckle up. "I am a firm believer in the fact that seat belts save lives and reduce injuries," he said. "In other words, click it!"

Among the factors that support successful traffic safety programs, Steve cites the example of employers who require all who drive on company time to attend defensive driving classes and also offer them as an option for *all* their employees. "These employers believe there is a two-fold payback: higher morale and a greater chance of their employees arriving safely, thus protecting the company family."

Minnesota's next big enforcement campaign will be held in late August - early September and will focus on impaired driving. Steve identified some of the basic questions employers need to consider to reduce risk in this area:

- Do you have a drug and alcohol policy in place?
- Do your employees do business on the road, for example, entertaining clients? If so, what is your policy about consuming alcohol before operating a company car?
- In terms of recognizing whether someone is impaired on the job, do your supervisors and employees know what to look for?
- Do they know who to go to for help and intervention, whether medical, physical, emotional or for actual dependency?

Employers need to talk with employees, raise awareness and provide training. They should develop a plan based on their specific issues and any state or federal regulations they may be subject to.

Sample policies are available on our Web site, which can provide a starting point for your organization. See www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org/mo and click on the "Plans, Policies and Checklists" tab. Impaired driving payroll stuffers and brochures are available from Minnesota NETS. See samples at www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org/nets/N-res.cfm and a printable order form at www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org/nets/faxorder.pdf or contact Lisa Kons at 651-228-7330/800-444-9150; kons@minnesotasafetycouncil.org.

Driving While Impaired: Face the Facts

You drive impaired. You lose.

In 2005, 37,002 impaired driving incidents were entered onto people's driving records.

The law

- If your alcohol-concentration level is 0.08 or higher (0.04 in a commercial vehicle) and you are in control of a moving or *parked* vehicle, you can be arrested for DWI.
- If a law enforcement officer can prove that alcohol caused you to commit driving errors, you can be convicted of DWI at lower alcohol concentrations.

Alcohol-related crashes cost lives

- The more severe a crash, the more likely it is that alcohol was a factor.
- Impaired drivers are likely to pay the price for their dangerous behavior. In 2005, 154 (78 percent) of the 197 people who died in alcohol-related crashes caused the crash.

It isn't just about alcohol

Driving while impaired can include being under the influence of drugs (even prescription drugs)



one dwi can cost you over \$15,000. talk about your un-happy hour.

drive
sober



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PI 203

