

THE MONTHLY SCOOP

The DOT Doctor Newsletter

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Hot News!!!

- MCSA-1 replaces the MCS-150 form effective Oct 23, 2015
- Brake Check Week Starts September 6, 2015

Want to know more give us a call at **844-DOTDOCTOR**



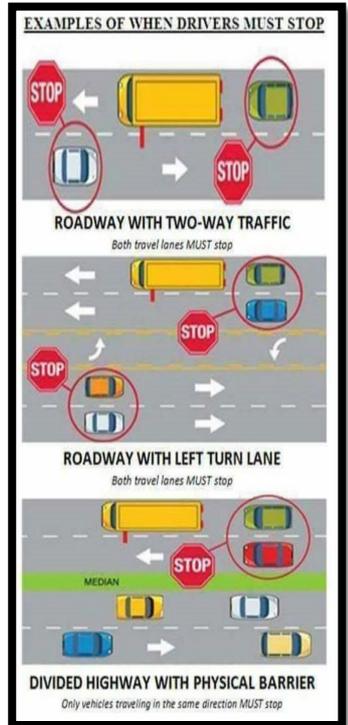
Back to School Time

Summer came and Summer went now it is time for back to School. That means there will be buses on the roads, children in the streets, and crazy parents rushing to school.

This time of the year can be very dangerous. Who needs snow and ice when you have a soccer mom doing 90 down the road while applying makeup and yelling at her children all in an attempt to make the school bell on time?

Even the quiet country roads are now lined with children as early as 5 in the morning! Rural areas have school bus traffic and children lined up anywhere from 4am until 7pm or later. Don't think just because you are outside of a city or town that you are safe from school buses and rushed parents.

If back to school wasn't enough, add in the change of seasons that is occurring. Autumn means falling leaves, rain, fog and in some areas snow and ice. All together we are talking one huge mess!!! Which reminds us, winter driving is right around the corner but more on that next month.



DWI-Driving While Intoxicated

**ANSWERING A 5
SECOND TEXT
TAKES YOUR
EYES OFF THE
ROAD LONG
ENOUGH TO
CROSS AN ENTIRE
FOOTBALL FIELD!**

Techno babies have bloomed and are the next drivers on the road. They have been **privileged** to have cell phones their whole life. As teens, they spend their time texting and Facetiming. This is the next generation of drivers. If our zombie teens can't put a phone down to walk, how can they do so to drive?

Take a look at the 2015 statistics:

- 10% of drivers under the age of 20 involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted drivers at the time of the crash, the largest population of any age group.
- Drivers in their 20's make up 27% of the distracted drivers in fatal crashes.
- 1 out of 4 teens response to a text message while driving.
- Recent research commissioned by FMCSA shows that the odds of being involved in a safety-critical event (e.g., crash, near-crash, unintentional lane deviation) is 23.2 times greater for CMV drivers who engage in texting while driving than for those who do not.

Don't let your drivers become a statistic!

See what can happen from **Distracted Driving** on [YouTube](#).

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Final Destination

Does anyone every feel like they are trapped in the movie *Final Destination*? There maybe an explanation as to why you fell that way. As technology grows in the world, so does the dangers on the highway. With our next generation of cell phone babies getting their licenses, the roads have become more and more dangerous! As professional drivers, you realize this is a serious problem. No longer is the worry just about drunk or fatigued drivers but now you have to worry about a car swerving lanes just to text! Don't be a part of the problem. Be the solution!

Top Causes of Distracted Driving Accidents:

- ⇒ Talking on the phone
- ⇒ Texting
- ⇒ Use a hands free device (Or trying to make it work!)
- ⇒ Smart watches
- ⇒ Drinking and Eating while Driving
- ⇒ Smoking
- ⇒ Talking or Yelling at people in the Car
- ⇒ Applying Makeup

Texting and Driving Statistics

Texting while driving is a growing trend, and a national epidemic, quickly becoming one of the country's top killers. Drivers assume they can handle texting while driving and remain safe, but the numbers don't lie.

Texting While Driving Causes:

1. 1,600,000 accidents per year – National Safety Council
2. 330,000 injuries per year – Harvard Center for Risk Analysis Study
3. 11 teen deaths EVERY DAY – Ins. Institute for Hwy Safety Fatality Facts
4. Nearly 25% of ALL car accidents

Texting While Driving Is:

1. About 6 times more likely to cause an accident than driving intoxicated
2. The same as driving after 4 beers – National Hwy Transportation Safety Admin.
3. The number one driving distraction reported by teen drivers

Texting While Driving:

1. Makes you 23X more likely to crash – National Hwy Transportation Safety Admin.
2. Is the same as driving blind for 5 seconds at a time – VA. Tech Transportation Institute
3. Takes place by 800,000 drivers at any given time across the country
4. Slows your brake reaction speed by 18% – HumanFactors & Ergonomics Society
5. Leads to a 400% increase with eyes off the road

Helping Hand or the Next Deadly Item

Technology is growing and it is supposed to be our friend, right? Well it is turning out to give us one headache after another. First we had the good old cell phone and that got us in trouble for talking when driving. Then we had text message that got us into more trouble for texting and driving. Now we have the smart watch.

Friend or Foe this watch? Is it a better way to interact with our phones? Everything goes to the cute little watch on your arm but is it just another distraction? You are not touching the phone right? Hands our still on the wheel? Yet how long did you look at that watch? Five, maybe ten seconds? That is all you need to cross the length of football field.

In May, a driver in Canada was issued a \$120 ticket for simply using his smart watch. The officer stated that Section 439.1 of the [Quebec Highway Safety Code](#) that reads: "No person may, while driving a road vehicle, use a hand-held device that includes a telephone function " as the reason for the ticket.

Is this a new trend? Will it come here to the states? No one knows for sure. If your eyes are taken off the road for any reason then it is a distraction! Check out the latest FMCSA Distracted Driving Rules. (<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/driver-safety/distracted-driving>)

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TOP QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH:

Q: Are companies legal responsible for controlling there Drivers “Bad Habits” or “Distracted Drivers” today?

A: Companies were required by the FMCSA to distribute letter to their drivers in Jan 2013 stating that cell phones may only be used in a “hands free” manner. What is “hands free”?

“Hands free” is:

- Locate the mobile phone so it is operable by the driver while restrained by properly adjusted safety belts.
- Utilize an earpiece or the speaker phone function.
- Use voice-activated or one-button touch features to initiate, answer, or terminate a call.

Penalty for non-compliance:

The [rule imposes sanctions](#) for driver offenses, including civil penalties up to \$2,750 and driver disqualification for multiple offenses. Motor carriers are also prohibited from requiring or allowing their drivers to text or use a hand-held mobile phone while driving and may be subject to civil penalties up to \$11,000. Violations will impact SMS results. Texting and calling on a hand-held phone carry the maximum violation severity weighting in SMS!

Learn more at: <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/driver-safety/distracted-driving#sthash.vdsxTlXk.dpuf>

These rules are not just for CMV drivers any longer. Many states and/or localities have enacted Distracted Driving laws that apply to everyone.

Haven't supplied your drivers with this letter yet? Contact [The DOT Doctor](#) today for a solution.

Q: With the turning of the seasons is a company responsible for keeping the road way clean of seasonal debris like leaves, mud, water or gunk run off?

A: A carrier is always expected to act responsibly. This means to take every precaution to prevent spills, leaks and/or flying debris from one's vehicle. This is not just a seasonal precaution but an everyday practice. 49 CFR 390.5 clearly defines what is required to secure a load.

The professional driver takes time to make sure there is no foreign substance on his truck. He ensures his load is secure, debris is swept clean and his vehicle is roadworthy. As an example: a professional driver will stop just past the gate when exiting an oilfield as to check for rocks, stones, mud and other items that may have lodged themselves upon or in the wheels and carrying areas on his vehicle. He will preform a quick PTI before preceding to the public roadway. Hazmat haulers will ensure nothing is leaking and their load is fully contained at all times.

Carriers must be responsible for their driver's actions. This includes spills, items that blow or travel from their yards or other similar types of trash and highway hazards. This means having a good PM program as to prevent undue oil leaks. Having an SOP in place to ensure vehicles are clean and free from debris, including snow, prior to entering the roadway. Storm water plans, required by the EPA in most areas, address water and mud run-off. Leaves are just one of the many items that cause slippery roadways. Did you know that sugar and certain chemicals sloshing from an improperly secured dome lid can create a slick zone on a highway 80x slipperier than road oil after a rain? The wheels of an unsuspected motorist can quickly spin-out upon contact causing multiple vehicle pile-ups. Even snow blowing from the top of a semi-trailer can gain you a hefty fine in states like PA and NJ. New Jersey's penalty is as much as \$1,500 for commercial vehicles and up to \$100 for a passenger car.

In summary:

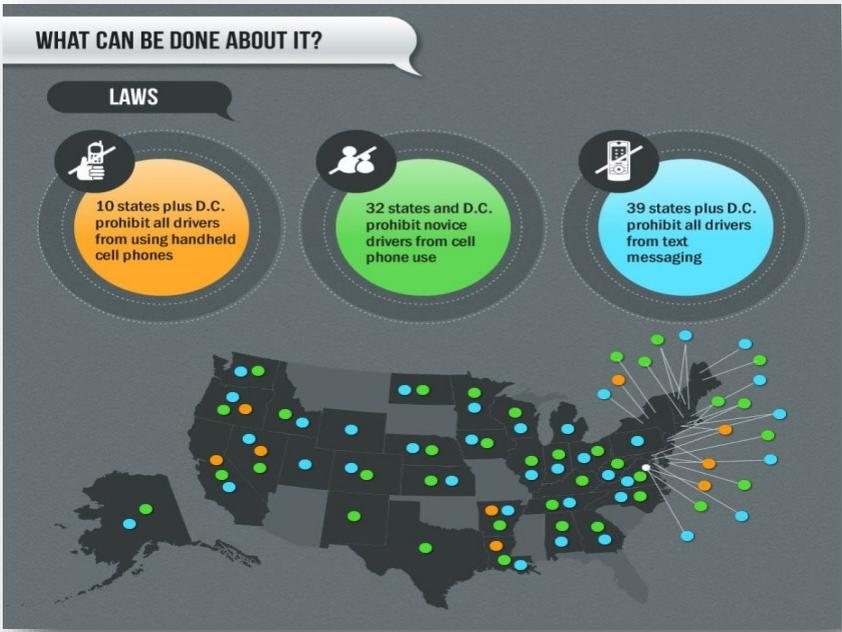
- ⇒ Check your vehicle as not to drag any undesired items onto the roadway.
- ⇒ Keep your yard clean and free of debris so that none is blown or drug onto the roadway.
- ⇒ Comply with all Storm water programs in your area.
- ⇒ If there is excessive run-off; fix the situation if on your land or notify the authorities if it is a place you have observed.
- ⇒ Clean up what you spill if it is small and containable.
- ⇒ Report spills promptly and try to contain the scene until officials arrive.

Q: Is it time to worry about winter driving this early in the year?

A: Snow has begun to fall in our northern states. WY reported it first snow fall last week. Our next edition will address winter driving and cold weather readiness. Sept 1 begins chain requirements. View Chain Laws; listed by state—http://thedotdoctor.com/chain_laws.

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What to Do

Carriers are responsible for the safety of their drivers and for the safety of others. Make sure your company has a good Anti-Distracted policy in place. Stop distracted driving before it begins in your fleet.

Do you and your drivers know when to follow Federal regulations and when state laws apply? Each state has it's own additional set of laws. Each locality has the right to add their own laws and regulations.

Did you know in some states it is illegal to drink water and drive? Did you know it is illegal in most states to use a hands free device in a school zone regardless what vehicle type you are driving? Did you know that in some states it is illegal to use your cell and drive even in a car?

The federal Government prohibits all their employees from texting while driving. This is one way they are leading by example. If they can do so; so can we.

Now how does that policy of yours look? Is everything covered? Is it DOT Compliant? Don't have one or need help with writing a policy give The DOT Doctor a call at **844-DOTDOCTOR.**

Each day in the United States, more than 9 people are killed and more than 1,153 people are injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver.¹ Distracted driving is driving while doing another activity that takes your attention away from driving.

Distracted Driving | Motor Vehicle Safety | CDC ...
www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/.../index.html

Is this answer helpful?

Safety Compliance Professionals
844-DOTDOCTOR



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