

## Breaking Bad Habits



Together Car crashes are the number one cause of workplace death, with distraction as a leading factor. Inattentive driving has become an unfortunate part of our culture. In fact, 45% of drivers feel pressure from employers to drive distracted, according to a recent National Safety Council survey. Although you may think that distracted behind the wheel is very dangerous and should never be considered a business necessity. No conference call or company email is worth a life.

Follow these steps to make it easier to **Just Drive** behind the wheel, and work with your coworkers to improve driving behavior. Remember, hands-free devices don't make you safer – while they allow for one more hand to be placed on the steering wheel, they do not reduce the distraction to the brain. The message is a simple one: when you are behind the wheel, Just Drive.

- Schedule calls for times when you will not be driving • Avoid calling your colleagues, clients etc. if you know they are driving
- Plan your workday ahead of time so you won't need to use a mobile device for calls, texts or emails while behind the wheel – even hands-free
- Change your voicemail greeting to something like: "Hi, you've reached (insert name). I'm either away from my phone or I'm driving. Please leave a message." You also can let callers know approximately what time you will be available again so they know when to expect to hear from you.
- If a ringing phone is too tempting, get in the habit of silencing your phone before you start to drive, or lock it in the trunk or glove box
- If you are in a vehicle with a driver who is using a mobile device – whether it be a coworker or a cab driver – speak up for your safety and hold each other accountable
- Allow enough time during your commute for stops so you can pull over and park in a safe location to check email and voicemail messages, if necessary.
- Consider using call-blocking or auto response technology when you are driving
- Input destinations into the GPS before the vehicle is in motion.

Breaking bad habits can save the lives of county employees while they are on the job!

