April 2025

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2025-04-14 TBT Distracted Driving

2025-04-14 TBT: Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is any activity that diverts a driver's attention from the primary task of driving, potentially leading to accidents and injuries. There are three main types of distractions: visual (taking your eyes off the road), manual (taking your hands off the wheel), and cognitive (taking your mind off driving).

Types of Distracted Driving:

- **Visual Distractions:**

  These involve looking away from the road, such as checking a phone, adjusting a navigation system, or talking to passengers.

- **Manual Distractions:**

  These involve taking your hands off the wheel, such as eating, drinking, or reaching for an object in the car.

- **Cognitive Distractions:**

  These involve taking your mind off driving, such as talking on the phone, daydreaming, or being lost in thought.

Common Examples of Distracted Driving:

- **Using cell phones:** Texting, calling, browsing, or using apps.
- **Eating or drinking while driving**.
- **Adjusting the radio or navigation system**.

- **Talking to passengers or other people in the car**.
- **Applying makeup or grooming**.
- **Fiddling with controls or displays in the vehicle**.
- **Looking at external distractions like signs or roadside features**.
- **Daydreaming or being lost in thought**.

Why is Distracted Driving Dangerous?

- **Reduced Reaction Time:**

  Distractions slow down a driver's reaction time, making it harder to respond to unexpected situations.

- **Impaired Decision-Making:**

  Distractions can make it harder for drivers to make quick and accurate decisions.

- **Increased Risk of Accidents:**

  Distracted driving significantly increases the risk of collisions and injuries.

Consequences of Distracted Driving:

- **Accidents and Injuries:** Distracted driving is a major cause of traffic accidents and injuries.
- **Legal Penalties:** Many states have laws against distracted driving, and violating these laws can lead to fines, points on your license, and other penalties.
- **Insurance Rate Increases:** Distracted driving accidents can lead to higher insurance premiums.

Tips for Preventing Distracted Driving:

- **Put away your phone and other devices:** Avoid using them while driving.
- **Focus on the road and driving:** Don't let anything distract you.
- **Pull over if you need to attend to something:** If you need to use your phone, eat, or do something else, stop the car in a safe place first.
- **Talk to passengers about the dangers of distracted driving:** Remind them to avoid being distracted while in the car.

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2025-04-07 TBT Snow is Melting Site Cleanup & Spring Safety

2025-04-07 TBT Snow is Melting: Site Clean-Up & Spring Safety

With the snow melting across our sites, it’s time to stay alert and proactive about seasonal cleanup and safety. As we transition into spring, a few key hazards and tasks need our attention.

□□ Clean-Up Priorities:

- Clear debris, trash, and scrap that’s been uncovered by melting snow.
- Inspect walkways and jobsite areas for tripping hazards or pooled water.
- Drain or redirect standing water to prevent mud pits and erosion.
- Remove remaining snow piles near walkways, entrances, or equipment paths.

⚠ Watch Out For:

- Hidden objects in snowbanks – nails, stakes, rebar, etc.
- Slick spots from overnight freeze-thaw cycles.
- Soft or muddy ground creating unstable footing.
- Clogged or frozen drains causing water build-up.
- Exposed sharp or rusty materials creating injury risk.

□□ Safety Reminders:

- Wear proper PPE – waterproof boots, gloves, and hi-vis gear.
- Use cones or caution tape to mark hazards.

- Don’t lift heavy, wet items alone – team lift or use equipment.
- Be cautious when operating or parking machinery on soft ground.

Let’s keep our sites safe, clean, and productive.
If you see a hazard or need support with cleanup, speak up or reach out to your supervisor.
Teamwork now helps us avoid accidents later.

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2025-04-21 Dark Side of Electricity

2025-04-21 TBT – The Dark Side of Electricity

One of the most significant advances in the history of mankind must be the harnessing of electricity for power. Initially, electricity was generated and used to light up homes, and soon after distributed to power factories, offices and other worksites. It also powers heaters and air conditioners that keep us comfortable year-round, life-saving medical devices used in hospitals and clinics, and the computers and similar infrastructure necessary for the expansion of the digital age. And in the not-too-distant future, perhaps, it could be the primary power source for all our vehicles.

But electricity is not without its drawbacks; unintentional contact with electrical current can cause severe injuries or death, as can the arc flash created by an electrical short. Here are some of the ways electricity can cause injuries and fatalities:

- Electricity generates heat as it travels through body tissues. This heat can cause external burns on your skin where the electrical current enters and exits your body. The heat can also cause internal burns and other major damage to muscles and other internal tissues.
- Electricity flowing through your body can replicate or interfere with the signals being carried through your nervous system. In some cases, this can paralyze your muscles for the duration of contact with the electrical current. As a result, you could lose your balance and fall off a ladder, scaffold or other elevated working surface and suffer an injury.
- Electrical current running through your body can also restrict your ability to breathe normally, because it can paralyze the muscles used to expand your lungs. And in some cases, it can even interfere with the nerve signals that regulate the rhythm of your heart, which can then cause your heart to fibrillate (or beat irregularly) or go into cardiac arrest.
- An electrical-arc flash, which occurs as electricity travels through the air as an electrical short occurs, heats the air in the immediate area to super-hot temperatures. This arc flash can severely burn on your skin, as well as sear the inside of your lungs if you inhale the super-heated air. The extreme temperatures generated by an electrical arc flash can even melt metal, plastics, and other materials, sending molten particles spewing through the air.

These are certainly not the only examples of how inadvertent contact with an electrical current or the occurrence of an electrical arc flash can cause us to be injured or killed. But these examples do drive home why it is extremely important to follow basic precautions when we are

working with or near electrical lines, circuits, and equipment.

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2025-04-28 Portable Ladders

2025-04-28 TBT - Portable Ladders – Pre-Use Inspection

OSHA safety standards require that we inspect our portable ladders before we first use them on any work shift. This is so we can identify visible defects that could cause a ladder to fail and the user to possibly be injured. An inspection must also be conducted after any event that occurs during the shift that may cause damage to a ladder; for example, if a portable ladder were accidentally knocked over, dropped, or struck by moving equipment.

So here are some common safety hazards and defects you should look for when you first set up your portable ladder. Keep in mind that some of these inspection points are only applicable to specific types of ladders (like extension, step, or mobile ladders) or to ladders made of specific materials (like wood or metal), while other inspection points apply to all portable ladders:

? Side rails that are split, bent, dented, splintered, cracked, or broken

? Rungs, cleats, braces, or steps that have been bent, dented, cracked, splintered, or broken

? Screws, rivets, or other fasteners that are loose or missing

? Ladder components such as spreaders, hinges, and braces that are loose or damaged

? Spreaders that do not lock into place when the ladder is set up

? Ladder components that are rusted or corroded

? Damage such as burns or blisters caused by excessive heat or flames

? Non-skid safety feet or pads that are missing or damaged

? Wheels, casters, or stoppers on mobile ladders that are malfunctioning or damaged

? Pull ropes and pulleys that are worn, frayed, malfunctioning, or broken

? Steps, rungs, or side-rails which are oily, greasy, or otherwise slippery

? Makeshift repairs or modifications

When we do find structural or other defects on any portable ladder during our inspections, OSHA safety standards require that we immediately attach a tag stating “Dangerous: Do Not Use” or with similar language to the ladder. The damaged ladder must then be removed from service until it has

been repaired by a qualified person to its original condition. Ladders that cannot be satisfactorily repaired by a qualified person must be destroyed and replaced.

Of course, most ladder damage can be avoided by making sure ladders are stored in a safe area and in a secure manner, so they do not fall over or get struck by moving equipment or materials. And we should also take extra care when transporting portable ladders to avoid causing damage.

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