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## Toolbox Talk – Motor Vehicle Safety

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**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Company Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Supervisor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Job Name** \_\_\_\_\_

While moving through safety training programs and Toolbox Talks, it is easy to overlook motor vehicle safety. Contractors work with such an array of specialized equipment and materials, it is understandable for one to take their driving skills for granted. After all, most of the population drives every day – wouldn't you expect these safety standards to be mutually understood? However, this is far from the truth. In fact, in the oil and gas industry – the most dangerous industry for a contractor – nearly 40% of all deaths are caused by motor vehicle accidents. It is incredibly important for you to talk with your employees about safety while driving. Ample training and reminders such as these could be the difference between life and death.

### Guidelines for Discussion

While on the job, you will need to use different kinds of vehicles for a wide variety of reasons. You need to drive in order to transport materials to and from the worksite. You need to drive in order to move employees between worksites. Due to this frequent movement, contractors are at a high risk for vehicle accidents. Accidents are commonly the cause of:

- **Overloaded vehicles:** if a vehicle is loaded beyond its bearing capacity, then it is at risk for brake failure. Brake failure can cause a vehicle to roll, thus colliding with people, buildings, or other infrastructure.
- **Distracted driving:** this includes looking for items within the car, looking around at events/things around the road, fiddling with the radio, eating, and using a cellphone. Distracted driving is the #1 cause of accidents on the road. It is easy to assume that you can manage multitasking for a second, but one careless second is all it takes for an accident to occur.
- **Short following distance:** if you follow too closely behind the vehicle in front of you, then you increase the risk of a rear end collision. Rear end collisions account for 17% of all motor vehicle accident claims, and they are easily preventable in most cases by increasing your following distance.

If you get into an accident, it costs the company more than just the flat price of vehicle repairs. An accident can have widespread costs and effects, including:

- Insurance claims for damages to vehicles, property, and injuries to both drivers and passengers.
- Workers' compensation claims. Additionally, repeated accidents can result in a higher company premium. This can have lasting effects on the company budget and growth as a whole.
- General liability claims, which again can affect the company insurance policy in the future.
- Damage to the vehicle contents, including work materials and equipment.
- Lawsuits, such as negligent entrustment lawsuits and punitive damages.
- Damage to the company's reputation. Accidents affect the company's EMR, or experience modification rating, which essentially communicates the company's safety in relation to comparative companies in the industry. A bad EMR will negatively impact the likelihood of securing contracts in the future, and can eventually result in the death of the company.

Everyone is responsible for their behavior regarding motor vehicle safety. Employees can prevent accidents by obeying the speed limit, leaving a safe following distance, wearing a seat belt, refraining from cell phone use, and ensuring that they do not overload the vehicle. Additionally, employees can protect themselves and their coworkers by reporting any

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potential impairment to a supervisor (if they are on a medication that causes drowsiness, etc.). Employers can prevent accidents by conducting employee driver’s license background checks, training drivers in safe practices, and maintaining the vehicles through routine inspections. By being accountable for your own actions and paying attention to your environment, you can contribute to a safer environment for everyone.

**Safety Recommendations**

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**Job Specific Topics**

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**Attendees**

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