



# TOOLBOX TALKS

Guides for discussing safety.



## Distracted Driving



**Talk Leader:** Ask the group the questions in bold. You may read/refer to the unbolded text to facilitate discussion and understanding.

### **What are the hazards of distracted driving?**

There are three types of distractions: visual (taking your eyes off the road), manual (removing your hands from the steering wheel), and cognitive (not concentrating on the road or your mind is somewhere else). All of these can cause minor to fatal vehicle accidents.

### **Provide an example of a driving accident.**

John had just stopped to grab his morning coffee. He thinks about his important projects as he makes his way onto the highway. While on the highway he receives a phone call for his big project. He notices his Bluetooth is not connected so he attempts to connect the Bluetooth to his phone to drive hands-free. He turns his head for a split second to check the connectivity of the phone and doesn't realize the traffic has stopped. He turns back to the road and slams on the brakes. He hits the car in front of him and creates a chain reaction with three other cars. He is okay but shaken up.

### **How do we prevent vehicle accidents?**

Distractions happen. The key is to develop techniques to keep your mind alert and focused on the road. One key technique is to avoid known distractions such as eating, drinking, or using a cell phone while driving, even with hands-free devices. Put your cell phone on "do not disturb" mode. Schedule breaks on long drives for resting, eating, and checking messages. Driving may seem routine, but we need to stay aware and focused.

### **What specific driving hazards are in your area that you might miss if you were distracted?**

In general roadways: pedestrians, bicyclists, other vehicles, potholes, detours, and road closures. On job sites: workers, other vehicles, heavy equipment (e.g. dozers), forklifts, parking under a suspended load, stockpiled materials, etc.