



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Issue 1//2013

Protective Insurance Company

The benefits of TELEMATICS

Gone are the days of fleets being out of communication with drivers until they return from a trip. As technology has advanced and become more affordable, fleet managers have discovered more ways than ever to improve the performance of their drivers and track the movement of their motorcoaches or school buses. One type of technology that is becoming increasingly popular among public transportation fleets is telematics.

Telematics integrates vehicle monitoring systems, three-axis accelerometers, Wi-Fi, GPS, Bluetooth and cellular technology in a device that is smaller than a deck of cards. The device serves as your eyes and ears on the road, providing valuable data to help improve customer service, driver safety and operations management.

Vehicle tracking monitors whether drivers are on schedule and making stops as planned, and projects arrival times. With this data, companies can alert customers if a vehicle is going to be late. Additionally, vehicle diagnostics, tracked by the telematics device, can provide a picture of how comfortable the travel experience was for customers. For example, if the vehicle broke down during a trip and required maintenance, the instance would be logged by the device. Companies could follow up with customers after the trip to apologize for the delay and explain that it was due to maintenance issues.

Data on driver behavior is especially useful for making your safety training effective and reducing accidents and injuries. Telematics monitoring tracks drivers' actions during training and in real-time on the job to verify that they are putting into practice safe behaviors and techniques. Telematics data reports highlight trends in unsafe behaviors or improper procedures, helping you focus remedial training in the most needed areas. If you notice a specific driver is not performing safely, you can provide one-on-one feedback and monitor the driver closely to make sure the behavior is changed. Studies have shown that behavior adjustments based on telematics data can result in a 20 – 30 percent reduction in losses.

+ Benefits of telematics:

- **Track routes and alert customers** if a vehicle is running late
- Reduce collisions by **20 – 30%**
- Improve maintenance schedules
- Reduce fuel costs by up to **10%**

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Increase your operational efficiency with telematics!



anticipate maintenance issues and fix them before any problems arise, thus reducing breakdowns and maintenance costs. You can also use the data to measure fuel use and incentivize drivers to reduce fuel costs by limiting idling, speeding and aggressive driving. ■

Telematics improves customer service, promotes driver safety and helps protect your bottom line. As the amount of telematics data available continues to grow, risk management practices within the insurance industry will have to adapt. If you are interested in learning more about how your fleet can benefit from telematics, contact Dick Mahany at [317-429-2530](tel:317-429-2530).

Implementing a return-to-work program

Your workers, including drivers, are your most valuable assets. When they sustain injuries, it can have a significant impact on productivity, overall morale and your company's bottom line. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that only 50 percent of employees who are off work for more than six months ever return to employment. It's in everyone's best interest to have injured workers return to work as soon as possible. Return-to-work programs facilitate this transition while benefitting both you and your workers.

Return-to-work programs, sometimes referred to as light duty, provide alternative tasks for injured employees during their recovery until they are approved by a doctor to return to their regular job responsibilities. These programs are typically low cost to implement. According to the Job Accommodation Network, more than half of the accommodations cost employers no money. Of those that do cost, the average one-time expenditure is \$600. Additionally, return-to-work programs can reduce claims costs by up to 70 percent.

You benefit from return-to-work programs in several ways. These programs decrease the likelihood of lingering or false workers' compensation claims and can minimize prolonged disability expenses by speeding up worker recovery through the physical and mental stimulation of light duty. Return-to-work programs also retain the use of valued workers, and minimize the cost of hiring and training replacement employees. You also benefit from the productivity of workers who otherwise would not be doing any work while out due to an injury.

Return-to-work programs help workers because they are useful, contributing members of the team. They stay mentally and physically conditioned to a regular work schedule and maintain social contact with their fellow employees which can encourage a faster return to full duty. Return-to-work programs also minimize financial losses incurred due to time lost while recovering.

THE FACTS



Return-to-work programs can **reduce claims costs** by up to **70%**



50% of employees who are off work for 6+ months will **never return to employment**



More than 50% of return-to-work accommodations **cost employers nothing**

Establish a written policy before implementing a return-to-work program. The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has a toolkit for creating a policy and implementing a return-to-work program, available at www.dol.gov/odep/return-to-work. ODEP also has a list of relevant employment laws, which vary by state, available at www.dol.gov/odep/return-to-work/employer-law.htm#law.

As part of your policy, include modified job descriptions that list light duty tasks injured workers will be asked to perform during the return-to-work program. Ask injured workers' doctors to review the job description and approve tasks the workers can complete based on the severity of their injuries. Be careful to adhere to the doctors' restrictions to avoid re-injury and prolonged recovery.

So what light duty tasks can workers perform while recovering from an injury? A few ideas to get you started are listed in the box below. Be sure to consult with workers' physicians first to determine the extent and type of work they can safely perform.

POTENTIAL LIGHT DUTY TASKS:

- Sweep floors
- Check inventory and order supplies
- Sort mail
- Answer phones
- Inspect vehicles
- Check driver logs
- Wash windows
- Dust office furniture
- Clean tools for mechanics
- Paint
- Attend orientation again
- Check paperwork of drivers entering and exiting the lot
- Watch safety videos and create quiz questions
- Create an injury prevention presentation or handout based on the injury sustained

Companies without an office or those that have workers who live far away from the office should look into having workers perform light duty at a charitable organization. The company would pay workers for the hours they work at a charity.

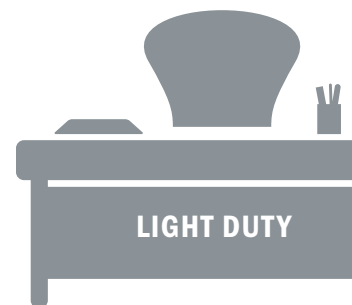
Companies could also make arrangements at a local motel for workers who live too far away. This would permit company management to monitor the injured worker and still give the worker an opportunity to perform light duty work.

Keep in mind that return-to-work policies will be implemented differently based on the state you are in and the types of injuries your workers sustain. Be proactive and put a return-to-work policy in place to facilitate the recovery of injured workers, maintain productivity, boost morale and protect your bottom line. ■

+SAFETY FIRST!

Consult with your workers' physicians first to determine the **extent** and **type** of work they can **safely** perform.

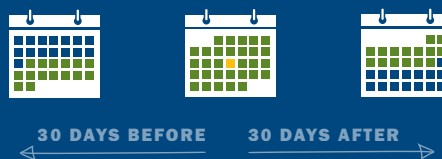
To request more information on how other companies have implemented return-to-work programs, contact us at publictransportation@protectiveinsurance.com.



RULE CLARIFICATION: When to obtain a new driver's MVR

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulation 391.23 subpart C requires motor carriers to obtain a new driver's motor vehicle record (MVR) within 30 days of the hire date. Most motor carriers assume this refers to the 30-day period **after** the driver is hired. However, the rule includes the 30-day period **before** the hire date as well. During driver file audits, motor

carriers are in violation if the pre-hire MVR is older than 30 days prior to the hire date. Protective Insurance Company standards require an MVR before the new hire starts driving, which is a stronger policy than DOT regulations. ■





Protective
Insurance Company

1099 N. Meridian St., Suite 700
Indianapolis, IN 46204

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Protective Insurance Company

“PROTECTIVE
understands the
IMPORTANCE
of a **STRONG**
CLIENT FOCUS”

AS A FAMILY-OWNED BUS COMPANY, our success has come from building and maintaining relationships, similar to Protective Insurance Company. **Protective understands the importance of a strong client focus** and building lasting partnerships. Birnie Bus is proud to partner with such an exemplary fleet insurance provider that **consistently goes above and beyond for its customers.**

Tim Birnie, CEO, and Lauren Birnie
Birnie Bus Service, Inc.

