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PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REPORT

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DRIVING IN CONSTRUCTION ZONES

Drivers like traveling on a well-kept road. A smooth road with no potholes, bright yellow and white lines, and clear and concise signage helps drivers do their jobs well. However, getting that well-kept road takes time, and more often than not, a lot of construction.

Highway construction zones are dangerous to drive through at any time of the year, but the number of construction zones increase during the warmer months. According to the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse, there were 3,261 fatal crashes involving commercial vehicles in 2010 (the most recent data available). Out of those crashes, 114 were located in a work zone; a significant decrease since 2005, when 289 commercial vehicles were involved in work zone accidents. While this is a significant achievement for the transportation industry, striving for safety is a long-term commitment for you, your drivers and your company.

Pay attention and stay alert

While you always want to be alert and aware while driving, it is especially important in a construction zone. According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), everyone is responsible for work zone safety. Planners and engineers are responsible for ensuring the work zone is operating properly and drivers are responsible for travelling safely through construction zones. In a work zone, drivers should always pay attention to roadway signs, construction workers on or near the road and the road's surface.

Roadway signs are meant to notify and give direction to drivers. Pay attention to these signs. They include important information about the route ahead. Be aware of the possibility of decreased speed, a lane change or detour.

Construction workers should not need to worry about on-site fatalities or injuries. Stay alert for roadway workers, and encourage your drivers to slow down and use caution when entering, travelling through or exiting a construction zone. Data has shown that the longer a construction zone is, the faster drivers' speeds increase.

Pay attention to the road surface. In a construction zone, there is always a possibility for debris. If the road is being mended, repaved or widened, the road's surface is more likely to be uneven. Be cautious and aware of any anomalies appearing in the roadway such as potholes or miscellaneous debris. If possible, seek alternate routes and avoid the work zone.

Construction zone layout

While each individual construction zone differs, knowing the general layout of construction zones helps your drivers plan for their next maneuver. Each construction zone is comprised of five areas that are designed to keep all workers and motorists safe.

1. **Advance warning area:** Alerts drivers on what to expect and allow enough time to adjust driving.
2. **Transition area:** Allows drivers to move to a new path including merging lanes.
3. **Buffer area:** The open space between the transition area and the work zone, which gives space between drivers and workers before traffic actually reaches the active work area.
4. **Work area:** Closed to traffic and houses workers, equipment and building materials. More often than not, only a barricade is separating the traffic from the worker and machinery.
5. **Termination area:** Provides a short distance for traffic to clear the work area and return to normal traffic patterns.

Driving strategies

When traveling through a construction zone, drivers should be aware of driving strategies that will ensure greater work zone safety.

1. **Slow down.** Always pay attention to the speed limit, especially in construction zones. Some states have increased fines for speeding. Do not be intimidated by others behind you encouraging you to drive over the speed limit.
2. **Don't tailgate.** Double the following distance to allow more time to stop or safely react in case of an emergency.
3. **Stay a safe distance away** from construction workers and their equipment.
4. **Watch for stopped traffic.**
5. **Merge as soon as possible.** Don't wait until the last minute to merge into another lane. If all individuals on the roadway cooperate, traffic flows well and efficiency improves.
6. **Do not block traffic.** This is a traffic violation in most states and encourages road rage and aggressive driving in other drivers.
7. **Plan ahead.** Drivers should plan ahead and expect delays. Highway agencies use different methods to inform drivers about work zone delays. However, they will often suggest a detour that will allow drivers to avoid the work zone.
8. **During the Advance Warning Area, or earlier** if the driver sees traffic getting congested, make an announcement for all passengers to sit in their seats and fasten their seat belts (if equipped) until advised by the driver that it is safe again to move around once you are safely past the work zone. This will help prevent passenger slips, trips and falls should the bus brake, stop, bounce, turn, lane shift or otherwise divert from a smooth ride.

For more information on driving through construction zones and other safety tips, visit **protectiveinsurance.com/safety-solutions** and check out our "Safety Solutions: Driving Safely Through Highway Work Zones" video.

The benefits of TELEMATICS *and* DRIVER COACHING

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 motor coaches 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. Some systems even include video capture with both interior and exterior views. In fact, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recently concluded that event-based on-board video systems, along with a driver feedback program, can provide significant safety benefits.

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.

Industry research shows that 5–10 percent of drivers in a fleet consistently drive faster than posted speed limits, drive fastest on highways, and have more "hard stops" and "hard turns" than the other 90–95 percent of the workforce. The research also shows that drivers who have these speeding events aren't necessarily driving longer distances than other drivers. These "high event count" drivers typically don't speed to do their work; they speed because they don't really understand the risks they are taking.

The cost of implementing and managing a robust safety program that includes telematics and formal driver coaching is much less than the cost of any losses themselves. **Our internal studies have shown that a driver behavior modification process based on relevant and timely telematics data can result in a 20–30 percent reduction in losses.**

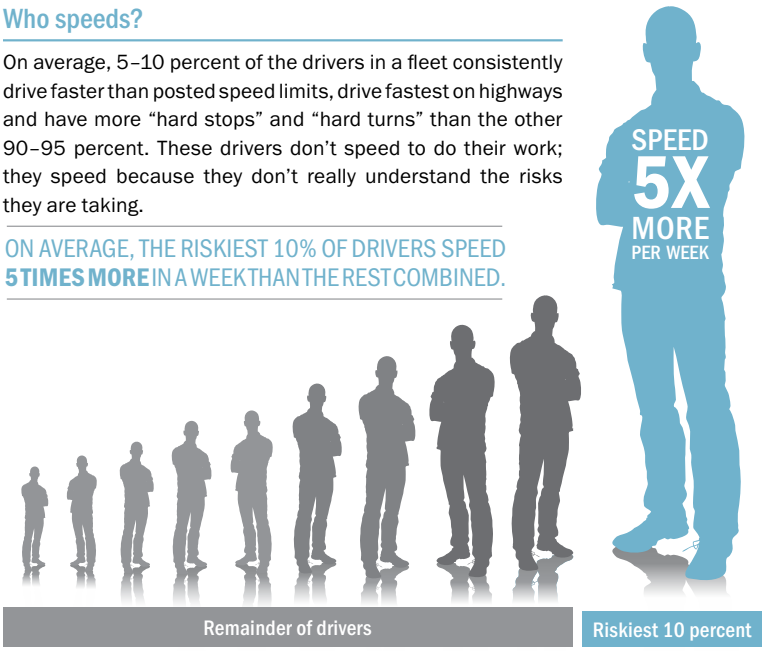
From a fleet management standpoint, telematics can increase operational efficiency. Vehicle diagnostics provided by the device show if vehicles are performing correctly or if maintenance is needed. The device can report developing problems detected by engine and drive-train sensors so timely maintenance can be planned that minimizes service interruptions and repairs. By regularly monitoring diagnostics reports, you can 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 both the insurance and public transportation industries will have to adapt.

Who speeds?

On average, 5–10 percent of the drivers in a fleet consistently drive faster than posted speed limits, drive fastest on highways and have more "hard stops" and "hard turns" than the other 90–95 percent. These drivers don't speed to do their work; they speed because they don't really understand the risks they are taking.

ON AVERAGE, THE RISKIEST 10% OF DRIVERS SPEED **5 TIMES MORE** IN A WEEK THAN THE REST COMBINED.



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OSHA Overview: Updated recordkeeping criteria

As of January 1, 2015, OSHA has updated the reporting and recordkeeping requirements for establishments under OSHA's jurisdiction. The updates primarily focus on two key rules that affect the types of injuries and illnesses employers need to report to OSHA and the types of employers that are required to keep records.

The updates state that:

- All work-related fatalities must be reported within eight hours of the occurrence, and only those fatalities that occur within 30 days of the work-related incident.
- All work-related in-patient hospitalizations (including single hospitalizations), all amputations and all losses of an eye must be reported within 24 hours of the occurrence. If the hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye occurs outside of the 24 hour time-frame following the incident, then the incident does not need to be reported directly to OSHA.

OSHA regulations also require certain employers to customarily keep records of serious employee injuries and illnesses. OSHA's revised recordkeeping regulation maintains the exemption for low-hazard employers with 10 or fewer employees at all times during the previous calendar year. However, the revised recordkeeping regulation provides an updated list of industries OSHA considers to be "low-hazard." The updated list of exempt industries is now classified by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), which is the standard used by federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of gathering, investigating, and issuing statistical data associated to the U.S. business economy.

Go to **osha.gov/recordkeeping2014** for the new reporting requirements and updated industry lists.