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## *Weekly Safety Tip*

*Life Is All About Choices!*<sup>®</sup>

August 14, 2017

### SCI Safety Tip: Distracted Walking a Major Pedestrian Safety Concern (Part) 2

Source: <https://www.safety.com>

By: [Caitlin McCormack](#)



Researchers from Ohio State University found that young people (under the age of 25) are more likely to be injured while on their cell phones, and men are more likely than women to be injured while using a mobile device. Their statistics showed that talking on the phone made up about 69 per cent of injuries, while texting only accounted for about 9 per cent.

“If current trends continue, I wouldn’t be surprised if the number of injuries to pedestrians caused by cell phones doubles again between 2010 and 2015,” said Jack Nasar, co-author of the study and professor of city and regional planning at The Ohio State University, in a 2013 release. One of only a few studies focusing on the issue, it found that although pedestrian injuries overall had dropped, ER visits tripled between 2004 and 2010 for pedestrians using cell phones. No doubt as more data is collected on the issue, the numbers of those affected by distracted walking will continue to rise.

The solution to distracted walking is a fairly simple one: do not use your cell phone or engage in other distracting activities while walking. Focus solely on the task at hand – getting from point A to point B in one piece and worry about checking in once you’ve safely arrived.

If you simply cannot wait to take that phone call or check your email, one way to avoid potential issues associated with using tech while walking is to hold your phone up higher in your visual field so that you can see any potential risks as they come. Ensure you cross the road at crosswalks or signalized intersections and obey your traffic signals.

***SCI Safety Slogan***

**Safety  
– It’S  
The Tool  
For LIFE**

***James Lehrke-SCI***

Another solution for avoiding problems is to take frequent breaks while you are using your device and walking – looking up every few seconds to assess your surroundings will help increase your safety.

Using softwares that read out messages to you, and voice recognition typing so that you can give commands with your voice instead of having to continually look at your screen can also help. And just as there's an app for everything else, there are apps designed to help those texting while on the go – Type n Walk is available for \$1.19 in the iOS App Store and the free Walking Text from the Google Play Store are just two such apps available for this purpose.

If you're using headphones, ensure the volume is at a reasonable level so that you can hear any potential dangers and alerts before they become an issue. You can also keep just one earbud in so that you can still have a decent level of hearing ability. It should also be noted that noise-cancelling headphones should be a no-no while walking so that you can still be aware of your surroundings.

Finally, start the safe device use education process early. "If you must talk or text, pull out of the stream of pedestrian traffic and stop walking while doing it. If you're a parent, just as you teach your children to look both ways before crossing a street, teach your children not to use their mobile devices while walking or driving," Nasar said.

Other safety concerns for pedestrians:

#### **Traffic signals**

This goes for both pedestrians and vehicular traffic, but not obeying traffic signals is another major area for concern when it comes to pedestrian safety. Many a driver has been frustrated after a pedestrian has begun crossing the road when their signal says not to. You'll even see people trying to cross when the light is not in their favor. No matter how late you are or whether or not you think you can make the light, if the signal is not in your favor, do not begin crossing. Failure to yield on the pedestrian's part accounts for about 15% of pedestrian fatalities, according to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

As for vehicles, aggressive drivers will often disobey their lights as well – speeding up to run through yellows when they should be slowing down; trying to get 'just one more' through on a left hand turn; or the 'rolling stop/turn' on a right led or at a stop side. All of these behaviors put pedestrians and other drivers at risk of serious injury or death.

#### **Cross at appropriate places**

Jaywalking, or crossing the road where there is no intersection or crosswalk, is another leading cause of pedestrian injury. Cross where appropriate in order to avoid injury and whenever possible, walk on a sidewalk – if a sidewalk is not available you should walk on the shoulder of the road facing traffic so that you can clearly see oncoming vehicles and they can see you. Data from the NHTSA has found that crossing at improper places accounts for approximately 30% of pedestrian fatalities. Walking, playing, working, etc., in the roadway also accounts for 25% of fatalities.

#### **Visibility**

It can be difficult for drivers to see those walking at night or in inclement weather. When possible, wear light-colored clothing and walk in well-lit areas. Carry a flashlight, wear a headlamp, and wear reflective clothing for added visibility.

## OSHA News: Fatality Investigation: Orchard Worker Dies After Falling Off Tractor

Source: <http://www.ehstoday.com>

By: [Stefanie Valentic](#)

Date: August 11, 2017

A 25-year-old orchard laborer in Washington dies from injuries suffered after a rotary mower attached to a tractor runs him over.

On a morning in April 2013, a Washington-state orchard supervisor left the orchard to pick up tractor parts. Before leaving, he asked a fellow worker to perform a task using a working tractor. When the supervisor returned at 10:00 a.m., he discovered that worker was severely injured.

At some point during the time the supervisor was gone, the employee had been run over by the mower attachment after falling off the tractor, suffering large cuts on the back of his head and arms.

A subsequent investigation conducted by the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control (WA FACE) found the following:



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Quick Tips for Healthy Living

Facts and Myths About Hand Washing

Want to avoid being sick? Here’s a fact: You can take one simple step to reduce your risks for sickness: Wash your hands!

Simply *washing your hands* can help you stop bugs such as viruses and bacteria. Otherwise, germs can ride on your hands into your body to infect you.

See how many facts about washing your hands you know!

**Fact or Myth:** You need to use antibacterial soap for effective cleaning.

That’s a myth. Any good hand soap will clean your hands — whether antibacterial or not. An antibacterial soap is a good choice for places where people’s immune systems are weak. Places such as hospitals and nursing facilities. Antibacterial soap can also be helpful if your home has pets.

**Fact or Myth:** Overuse of antibacterial products can actually end up being bad for you.

This is a fact. Overuse of antibacterial soaps can reduce the amount of healthy bacteria on your skin. Overuse can make soaps’ antibacterial agents less effective in fighting new strains of germs.

**Fact or Myth:** If you use an antibacterial soap, you don’t need to wash your hands as often.

This is another myth. When using an antibacterial soap, you should not change how often or how well you wash your hands.

**Fact or Myth:** Hand sanitizers are an effective alternative to washing with soap.

This is a fact. Products with at least 60 percent alcohol are an effective alternative when you can’t use soap and warm water to wash your hands. Both sanitizing fluids and wipes have the benefit of being portable, so you can use them in lots of places.

Teach your family how to stop the spread of germs. It can help you all reduce sickness and stay well!

The victim was using the tractor and mower attachment to cut the grass between rows of pear trees. The incident was not witnessed, but investigators believe that it is most probable that he fell when he attempted to dismount the tractor to retrieve his hat that may have been knocked off by a low hanging branch.

He likely either failed to put the tractor in neutral when he stopped, causing the tractor to lurch forward when he removed his foot from the clutch pedal, or inadvertently moved the gear selector lever out of neutral as he stood up to dismount the tractor.

In either scenario, it is assumed that the sudden or unexpected movement of the tractor caused him to fall to the ground between the tractor and the mower. As the tractor continued to move forward, the victim’s upper body was run over by the 1740 lb. mower. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

WA FACE also discovered during the investigation that the ignition on the tractor had been bypassed and a starter switch had been added, allowing the machine to be started while in gear. Manufacturer specifications only allowed the tractor start and stop using the key. However, investigators could not determine if the modification played any part in the accident.

The agency, which operates under the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries’ Safety & Health & Research for Prevention (SHARP), provided the following recommendations to prevent future incidents:

- Train operators to always shut down tractors safely before leaving the driver’s seat. Ensure that they follow safety guidelines through frequent retraining and spot checks.
- Train operators to always mount and dismount tractors in a safe manner by using all steps and handholds available, and maintaining three points of contact.
- Keep clear of obstacles, such as low hanging branches, to the extent possible when operating a tractor with or without attachments.
- Consider using tractors equipped with operator presence sensing (OPS) technology or other interlocks that will lock out the powertrain and PTO if the operator leaves the driver’s seat.

According to WA FACE, the employer had a written safety program and monthly meetings. Tractor safety training was provided on an annual basis. In addition, the victim had been provided and signed-off on written tractor safety material twice since beginning employment.

Details of the entire investigation can be found on the [NIOSH website](#).

We’d always like your feedback. Let us know what articles you’d like to see!

In Loving Memory...  
Jessica, Kristin and Nick

