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Weekly Safety Tip

Life Is All About Choices!®

August 7, 2017

SCI Safety Tip: Distracted Walking a Major Pedestrian Safety Concern

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

By: [Caitlin McCormack](#)

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Distracted driving is a well established problem, so much so that many states currently have bans in place when it comes to using technology while driving. But the problem of distracted walking is a relatively new one. Each year, more and more people are injured as a result of texting, talking or listening to music while on their cell phones. And while we might laugh at the woman who falls into the fountain while texting, or the man who walks into a wall while texting, the problem of distracted walking is a very real and serious one.

According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), nearly 5,000 pedestrians were killed and an estimated 76,000 injured in traffic collisions in the United States in 2012. That's one death every 2 hours and an injury every 7 minutes. While it's not clear how many of these are a direct result of distracted walking, the total rate of pedestrian fatalities compared to overall road deaths is getting worse each year.

The issue has become such a problem that some towns, such as Fort Lee, New Jersey, have banned texting while walking. If caught texting while jaywalking in that town, violators face an \$85 fine. In London, England, some lamp posts have been padded in order to protect the large numbers of people using their mobile devices while walking. Even New York City has lowered the speed limit in some areas as a way to help cut down on the number of pedestrian injuries. Arkansas, Illinois, and New York have all tried unsuccessfully to ban using a mobile device while walking.

SCI Safety Slogan



James Lehrke-SCI

Common risks associated with distracted walking include:

- Injuring someone else
- Trips
- Sprains
- Strains
- Fractures
- Cuts
- Bruises
- Broken bones
- Concussions
- Brain injuries
- Spinal cord injuries
- Death

In 2008, more than 1,000 people were injured seriously enough to seek medical attention at the emergency room as a result of texting and walking – double the year previous (which was double the year previous as well).

A study published in 2012 by researchers from New York’s Stony Brook University found that those who texted while walking were 60 per cent more likely to veer off line than non-texters.

Scientists call the phenomenon “inattentive blindness,” saying that the human brain has evolved to only be able to adequately focus attention on one task at a time. So when you’re texting or talking on the phone while trying to walk, you cannot give your full attention to both tasks.

“We were surprised to find that talking and texting on a cell phone were so disruptive to one’s gait and memory recall of [a] target location,” wrote Eric M. Lamberg, PT, EdD, co-author of the study and Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Physical Therapy, School of Health Technology and Management, Stony Brook University.

“People really need to be aware that they are impacting their safety by texting or talking on the cellphone,” he added, “I think the risk is there.”

When Safe Sound Family analyzed the data in the Consumer Product Safety Commission’s (CPSC) National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) – which estimates the number of injuries nationwide based on reports by 100 participating hospitals – we found that there were nearly 5,000 estimated cases of injuries caused by phones and phone accessories that occurred on roads or highways and in other public places (not at home) that were treated in hospital in the United States in 2013.

The number of actual injuries caused by distracted walking is bound to be quite higher than this, as the data from the CPSC only looked at those injuries which resulted in medical treatment at a participating hospital, and minor injuries were likely treated at home or another medical treatment facility not included in the reporting data. There is also the stigma and shame associated with reporting an injury in which one is partially at fault, and so some people may not have been upfront with the fact that they were using a mobile device when their injury occurred.

It’s not just texting while walking that’s a problem. Talking, checking email, using social networking apps and even playing games all contribute to the problem of distracted pedestrians.

According to data via the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the highest percentage of pedestrian deaths relative to all traffic fatalities occurs in New York City (51%), Los Angeles (42%) and Chicago (30%). After years of decline, pedestrian deaths have started to increase since 2009, and while there’s no reliable data directly related to cell phone use, experts speculate that the increase is due in part to distracted users on their cell phones while walking.

“We are where we were with cellphone use in cars 10 years or so ago. We knew it was a problem, but we didn’t have the data,” Jonathan Akins, deputy executive director of the Governors Highway Safety Association, told the Associated Press in 2012.

SCI OSHA News: Dozens of violations yield massive fine for manufacturing plant

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

Date: August 1, 2017



Quick Tips for Healthy Living

August is National Immunization Awareness Month

Summer is in full swing, temperatures are rising and we need to keep ourselves and kids safe! August is National Immunization Awareness Month and prevention is key!

It's not just the kiddos that need shots, adults need shots also! It is important to check that you are not overdue for Tetanus Diphtheria Pertussis vaccine and don't forget to get your annual flu shot! Adults can carry Pertussis (whooping cough) and spread to kids who have not completed their childhood immunization series.

Up-to-Date is a medical reference website and states, "Healthy adults also require regular vaccines. As many as 50,000 to 70,000 adults die annually of pneumonia and influenza in the United States, which could be greatly reduced with vaccinations. Receiving appropriate immunizations plays a crucial role in protecting health throughout a person's lifetime."

For a complete list of adult vaccines, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/adult.html>.

OSHA came down hard on a New Jersey aluminum manufacturer with what the agency calls "a long history of noncompliance with OSHA standards." The Camden County employer was cited for a whopping 51 safety and health violations, with proposed penalties of more than \$1.9 million.



On January 23, 2017, OSHA initiated its most recent inspection of the company, which has been the target of OSHA regulators eight times in the past 7 years. Since 2011, OSHA has cited the employer for 60 violations and assessed \$517,000 in penalties. During the most recent inspection, OSHA determined that two employees were hospitalized as a result of separate incidents. The first occurred when employees entered a tank to drain sludge containing sodium hydroxide, aluminum oxide, and decomposed metal. After reporting to their supervisors that they were experiencing chemical burns, the employees were directed to reenter the tank. There they experienced additional chemical injuries, which sent one worker to the hospital.

The second incident took place when a machine operator suffered a broken pelvis after being caught between the unguarded moving parts of a metal fabrication machine. Among willful citations, OSHA cited the company for failure to:

- Provide appropriate personal protective equipment to personnel.
- Conduct air monitoring before permit-required confined space entry.
- Provide confined space training.
- Use proper lockout/tagout rules.

OSHA Area Director Paula Dixon-Roderick said that despite its lengthy history, this employer "still does not comply with federal safety and health standards," leaving workers vulnerable to the risk of injury or possibly death.

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

In Loving Memory...
Jessica, Kristin a k

