



# Weekly Safety Tip

"Your Connection for Workplace Safety"

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*We're about service, commitment, results, and accountability!*

*Our Weekly Safety Tip provides valuable and current safety information relevant for Work, Home & Play.*

*And, you will be kept current on the latest Safety Compliance issues.*



**SCI SAFETY NEWS OR TIP**



**SCI OSHA NEWS OR COMPLIANCE**



**SCI HEALTHYLIVING and WELLNESS NEWS**

**We want to hear from you! Send us your feedback and give us ideas for future safety topics.**

**Let us know how you feel about our new look!**

**Safety Slogan**

**Zero compromise towards safety  
James Lehrke-SCI**

**of the week**

## SCI Safety Tip: Cell Phones and Driving: New Technology May Be the Answer

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

Date: March 15, 2012

As we reported in *yesterday's* Advisor, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has recently recommended that states ban all drivers from using cellular technology—including hands-free and Bluetooth sets.

Safety experts have been saying for a long time that the real safety issue is distracted driving, not hand-held versus hands-free phones. Drivers can be distracted by the conversation as much as by manipulating a hand-held phone.

Will states adopt NTSB's recommendation?

Matt Howard, CEO of ZoomSafer, which provides technology intended to promote safe driving, believes that's highly unlikely in the near future, although he does acknowledge that the federal government's positions on seat belt use, blood alcohol levels, and speed limits have been widely influential.

Howard believes that the current trend at both state and federal levels is to promote hands-free rules—in fact, there are currently two bills in Congress to that effect. And, he says, even adopting NTSB's rule won't solve the problem.

"Laws and regulations are easy, but they don't change behavior. Technology does change behavior."

### What Can You Do?

ZoomSafer and several other companies, including Cellcontrol, make and sell devices that can be installed in company vehicles to block all cell signals except calls to 911.

The software senses when a vehicle is moving and begins blocking signals. It is sensitive enough to detect speeds of more than 0 miles per hour, but employers can, if they wish, set them to block only at higher speeds.

"Different employers have different levels of tolerance for risk," says Howard, "ranging from 0 percent all the way up to 100 percent, so they can vary their settings accordingly."

Settings could also be varied according to whether an individual driver's route is in a busy or densely populated area, as opposed to a more rural one.

Note that similar devices designed for consumers that can block the cell signals of other mobile phone users are illegal, according to the Federal Communications Commission.

ZoomSafer's technology blocks signals only to and from the cell phone in the commercial vehicle where it's installed. Consumers can buy and have installed similar devices for personal cars, such as the vehicle that a newly licensed teenager will be driving.

## SCI OSHA News: OSHA Explains Its Opposition To Mandatory Flu Vaccinations

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

Date: March 15, 2012

It may seem ironic, but OSHA is not on board when it comes to mandatory flu vaccination for healthcare workers. A position statement on the issue notes that the agency is "strongly supportive of efforts to increase influenza vaccination rates among healthcare workers in accordance with the Healthy People 2020 goals."

However, OSHA does not see sufficient scientific evidence for the federal government to promote mandatory flu vaccine programs that lack an option to decline based on medical, religious, or other reasons.

What's more, OSHA says, "The current influenza vaccine is no magic bullet." Vaccine technology requires annual reformulation, which, according to OSHA, means that its effectiveness is variable. Every year there are strains of the flu that are not included in the vaccine.

OSHA also notes that reliance on a mandatory flu vaccine could provide healthcare personnel with "an unwarranted sense of security and result in poor adherence to other infection control practices..." That includes practices to guard against other infections, not just the flu.

## SCI Health News: Facts About Shift-work Health Problems

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

Date: March 15, 2012

*Shift-workers are at greater risk for health problems than day-workers. Two of those problems involve the cardiovascular system and the gastrointestinal system.*

Cardiovascular problems can arise as a result of shift-work because heart rate and blood pressure follow circadian rhythms, which are upset by the nighttime schedule. Circadian rhythm is the body's 24-hour cycle, and it regulates many of the body's functions.

When it comes to cardiovascular health, upsetting this natural rhythm can, over time, have seriously negative effects.

Normally, heart rate and blood pressure are lower at night and increase during the day. If an employee is working at night, however, blood pressure and heart rate stay high at night, too, because of the body's activity.

It's more difficult to get good, sound sleep during the day when body functions are awake. This means the cardiovascular system has trouble getting into a regular pattern of activity and rest. This can increase the risk of cardiovascular disorders.

Additionally, medical studies show that rotating shift-workers and nightshift workers have increased levels of triglycerides and glucose, which may contribute to coronary disease. Poor eating habits and lack of sleep that often go along with shift-work also contribute to cardiovascular disorders.

It's important to note, however, that shift-work is not *absolutely* associated with cardiovascular disease. No one's saying that because an employee work shifts that he or she is going to have a heart attack 10 years from now.

On the other hand, studies have also shown that men with a history of heart attack were more likely to have been shift-workers than those with no history of heart attack.

### Night Work and Stomach Ache

Do your shift-workers ever complain that working a late shift upsets their stomachs? If so, they're probably not imagining it.

Shift-workers sometimes experience gastrointestinal disorders because food is not well digested at night. Following the body's natural 24-hour cycle, a worker's digestive system slows down at night and is active during normal daytime eating hours.

The digestive system is most active in the morning, around noon, and in the early evening. That's why most people eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner at those times.

Eating when the digestive system isn't very active can cause indigestion, heartburn, stomach aches, and loss of appetite. So if shift-workers stomachs are aching, there could be a very easy explanation—the timing of their meals due to their work schedule.

Furthermore, shift-workers may be more likely to eat prepared foods that are easy to microwave or foods from late-night fast food restaurants. These foods are often greasy, heavy, and difficult to digest. They may not provide very good nutrition either.

### Snacks Don't Help Either

Snacking on sugary or fatty junk food from the vending machine is another common shift-work health problem.

Candy bars, cookies, and so on may give you a temporary burst of energy, but it only lasts a short time. Once the body has adjusted to the higher energy level and the sugar high wears off, a person's energy level actually drops below what it was before the snack.

Finally, carbonated drinks such as cola are often consumed by shift-workers for their caffeine content. But while the caffeine might help keep a shift-worker awake, the carbonation can irritate the stomach and cause indigestion and heartburn.

## HEALTHY BITES

### Quick Tips for Healthy Living

PREVEA  
Health & Wellness

### Water

**The average person should drink 64 ounces of water every day.**

Water is the best source for your daily fluid needs. Water is essential for our bodies because it is in EVERY cell, tissue, and organ in your body.

The human body is made up of 50 to 75 percent water, or about 10 to 12 gallons, so replenishing your body's water supply is crucial for proper function. According to the American Dietetic Association's Complete Food and Nutrition Guide, the average adult loses about two and a half quarts or about 10 cups of water daily. To maintain your body's fluid balance, you need to replace it each day.

Your body needs water when you are in hot climates, more physically active, or running a fever. When you are participating in vigorous physical activity, it's important to drink before you even feel thirsty. Thirst is a signal that your body is on the way to dehydration.



Water helps your body with the following:

- Keeps its temperature normal.
- Lubricates and cushions your joints.
- Protects your spinal cord and other sensitive tissues.
- Gets rid of wastes through urination, perspiration, and bowel movements.

Sources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2008). *Water: Meeting Your Daily Fluid Needs*. Accessed online September 14, 2009, at

<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/water.html>

The American Dietetic Association. (2005). *Water; Water Everywhere...How Much Should You Drink?* Accessed online September 14, 2009, at

<http://www.eatright.org/Media/content.aspx?id=1520&terms=water>

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*In Loving*

*Memory of Jessica Lefrke*