



Workplace Distractions



ARE YOU AWARE?

[Statistics](#) prove distractions among employees cause many workplace injuries and fatalities.

Distractions come in many forms. An employee might be mentally distracted by personal matters, such as family or finances. This can lead to inattention of pedestrians or other employees on site. Long hair can distract if it is not kept pulled back or under a hat. Even socializing, which is great for employee morale, can become a problem if it disrupts an employee's attention and a mistake happens.

Hurry is a distraction. If employees feel rushed by productivity demand, injuries or mistakes may occur. One report from the [National Safety Council](#) suggested 60% of respondents in the construction industry **"felt safety was less of a priority than finishing tasks."**

Finally, the greatest distraction among employees today is cellphone usage. This includes texting, talking, gaming, and social media. Many studies show that cellphones **impair employees' ability to recognize and react to hazards in a timely manner.**

OSHA regulations squarely forbid the use of cell phones in construction regulations pertaining to cranes and derricks (29 C.F.R. § 1926.1417(d)), but the hazard exists across any dangerous equipment or within any industry.

Due to the high number of workers injured in driving accidents, [OSHA](#) cites,

"Distracted driving is the number one cause of workplace fatalities, and cell phones are the biggest cause of distraction in the forms of text messaging, talking, and game-playing."





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ARE YOU PREPARED?

Above all, workplace safety must be a priority. Employers should monitor employee behavior closely and ask employees what distractions exist for them on the jobsite. Basic safety protocol [can help minimize workplace distractions.](#)



Make sure:

- Employees are aware of their surroundings.
- Necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is being utilized including, but not limited to, gloves, hard hats, safety glasses and shoes, earplugs or muffs, respirators, coveralls, vests, and full body suits.
- Unnecessary interruptions are kept to a minimum.
- Cellphone usage is restricted per company policies.

If an employee is struggling to focus, encourage periodic short breaks of 5-10 minutes.

In fact, a [recent study](#) shows that

“micro-breaks” of just a few minutes can increase job satisfaction, make it more likely an employee will go above-and-beyond their job description, and they reduce emotional exhaustion. Micro-breaks also increase productivity and lower the risk of injuries due to distractions.”

THE BERKLEY INDUSTRIAL COMP DIFFERENCE

Our R.A.M.P. (Risk Assessment Management & Prevention) Loss Control team is out in the field and only a phone call away when a customer needs assistance. This customer-focused team of advisors, technicians, and partners is committed to helping our clients develop effective risk management solutions based on each company’s individual needs or concerns. We go beyond a simple checklist—and our goal is to protect workers’ safety above all else.



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By providing such materials as our “Toolbox Talks” and assistance in setting up safety programs, AMIG sets itself apart in the insurance field. Customers only need to login via the password protected portion of our website to gain access to helpful training and educational information. Agents and clients alike can easily access valuable materials to help encourage a safe working environment.



In providing our customers with these important tools, we are aiding their endeavor to work efficiently and economically, while still prioritizing workers’ safety and well-being.

WHAT NEXT?

A constant review of all factors that can impair an employee's effectiveness should be reviewed regularly. By relying on managers and supervisors to monitor workplace behavior and conditions, employers can keep workplace distractions that result from personal matters, environment, and outside sources to a minimum.

As technology changes, company policies should be revisited to address both the appropriate and inappropriate usage of digital devices on the job site. These include the use of tablets, cell phones, drones, computers, and any other piece of technology that can help—and hinder—a worker’s production.

Companies need to be aware of liabilities that could occur when smart devices are used as part of the job. For instance, if an employer has not enforced a written policy prohibiting texting while driving, and an employee is involved in an accident while on the job, the employer could face potential liability.

If a company has questions regarding distractions in the workplace and how to address these safety concerns, encourage members of management to reach out to their R.A.M.P team representative.

