



Safety Matters

Leverity Insurance Group, Inc.: Your transportation and warehousing workplace safety partner

Hand-Held Cell Phones are Dangerous...and Illegal

Effective Jan. 3, 2012, the Department of Transportation prohibits commercial motor vehicle operators to use hand-held mobile phones on interstate highways.

This restriction is designed to curb distractions for commercial truck and bus drivers: Driver distractions represented 16 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2009.

Banned Devices and Practices

The use of hand-held mobile phones is strictly prohibited. Making or receiving calls, texting messages and other functions are not allowed to be performed on interstate highways.

Drivers may use their hand-held device when stationary, so long as they have moved to the side of or off the interstate, and can safely remain stationary.

Hands-Free Devices

Drivers may continue to use hands-free devices, but only if they do not cause a distraction. Points to remember:

- It is illegal to dial calls, provided dialing requires the driver to push more than one button.
- In order to answer the call, the cellular phone must be within a driver's reach, easily accessible.
- Citizens' Band (CB) radios, two-way radios and walkie-talkies are permitted.

- Drivers are allowed to use a hand-held mobile device in cases of emergency, so long as they are notifying law enforcement or other emergency services.
- Certain states do have outright bans on the use of mobile telephones; be aware of the laws in your area of operations.

Avoid Fines

Drivers who violate the restriction will face federal civil penalties of up to \$2,750 for each offense, and disqualification from operating a commercial motor vehicle for multiple offenses. Additionally, states will suspend a driver's commercial driver's license (CDL) after two or more serious traffic violations.

Keep in Touch

If you have any questions or concerns about the hand-held mobile phone restrictions, contact your supervisor immediately. Your safety is a top priority at .

Driver distractions caused 16 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2009. To ensure safety, CMV operators are not allowed to use hand-held mobile phones on interstate highways—it's the law.

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