



Safety in Any Language

Increased diversity in the workplace may create language and literacy barriers. When workers do not speak English, or have limited proficiency, they cannot communicate effectively with supervisors, coworkers, or customers. They may also have difficulty comprehending the requirements of their jobs.

In addition to problems with speaking English, some employees may not read well either. Even in their own language, they may be illiterate or only be able to read a little.

Without proper action on the part of management, language and literacy barriers can make it difficult or impossible for some employees to function effectively and safely in the workplace. These barriers can also make interaction and teamwork among workers more difficult and less efficient.

This means training issues take on even greater significance when the topic is safety.

Training Still Required

Failure to adequately train non-English-speaking employees about safety issues could not only result in lower productivity or more errors, but it could also result in injury or death. The stakes are high, and your

response must be equally vigilant.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) says that an employer's responsibility to provide employees with information and training about safety and health hazards doesn't go away because an employee can't understand standard English-language training programs. When that is the case, employers must inform and train these workers in a language they can understand.

When training employees with limited English skills, you need to take special steps to make sure the training is effective:

- ◆ Speak slowly, explain fully, and repeat important points several times.
- ◆ Choose the simplest words and avoid technical jargon. If you must use technical terms, be sure to explain them in simple terms.
- ◆ Use a translator with groups of employees who have only minimal English skills.
- ◆ Demonstrate while you speak, and use visual aids, such as pictures and props, to supplement your words.

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Member News

HITT Contracting Inc. has named Brian Denisar Senior Vice President and head of HITT's South Florida office.

As leader of the HITT South Florida team, Mr. Denisar will be responsible for providing project and executive oversight while managing day-to-day operations, guiding projects from discovery and design through development, implementation, and closeout with a "whatever it takes" attitude. Mr. Denisar has worked in the commercial construction industry since 1999 and has been an integral member of HITT's headquarters team for the past eight years, delivering successful projects in the Washington, DC area for Corporate Interiors clients.

Kaufman Lynn

Construction announced the promotion of Ben Baffer to Vice President, K-12 Education. Baffer is a seasoned construction professional with 25 years of experience in a variety of markets. He has been with Kaufman Lynn Construction for nearly six years, working primarily with education clients. As a senior project manager, he has been responsible for such projects as the award winning restoration of the Miami Dade College Freedom Tower Restoration in downtown Miami, the new Academic Support Center on the Miami Dade College Kendall campus and the phased replacement of Ft. Lauderdale High School.



Ben Baffer

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Creative Solutions for Complex Designs

Each month Construction FOCUS features a CASF member company, selected by drawing a business card from among those attending the monthly networking breakfast. The next breakfast, sponsored by Kaufman Lynn Construction, will be held on Thursday, August 15, 7:30 a.m. at the Embassy Suites - Boca Raton off Yamato Road.

Twenty First Century Engineering was founded in 1989 by John M. Carroll Jr & Gerard J. Cataldo, who have been business partners since 1978. They set out to develop a firm that had technical focus in a creative environment that allows the staff freedom to develop creative solutions for each and every complex design problem they encounter. With the company's extensive experience, they are able to guide clients through the difficult process of site planning, permit processing, project design and the construction coordination phases of their project development. Organization between developers, contractors, and their team is enhanced by

the use of modern technology including the latest updates of Revit, AutoCAD and electronic file transfers.

The company provides the construction industry with Civil, Structural, MEP, and Forensic Engineering services which include: Conceptual Design, Comparative Structural System Evaluation, Comparative MEP Systems Evaluation, Preliminary Budgeting, Design Development, Construction Document and Specification Development, Facility Expansion, Building/Code Upgrades, Supplemental Structural Foundation Analysis and Design including Concrete Reinforcement due to Increased Load Requirements, Damage Assessment and Structural Analysis for Repairs, Building System Failure

Analysis, Tenant Remodel (retail, restaurant and industrial), Feasibility Studies, Expert Witness, as well as Peer Review of Construction Plans, Specifications and Reports prepared by Other Design Professionals.

Currently, Twenty First Century Engineering employs 13 people and serves the geographic regions from Florida to Texas with projects in the Caribbean as well. "Some of the best things about working for Twenty First Century are that every day presents a new challenge and we rarely perform the same task twice", explains Carroll.

Twenty First Century recently rejoined CASF this past month after a brief sabbatical, having been members for 15 years prior. "The primary reason for our firm joining the association was to network with like minded individuals and companies who are making a difference in our local community. The networking activities provide an avenue to meet individuals from various organizations who interact throughout the design and construction industry. CASF's Craftsmanship Awards Process is extremely unique and provided me the opportunity to share knowledge and experience with the other judges and has also taught our staff how much teamwork and cooperation it takes to design and construct projects," expresses Carroll.

Twenty First Century Engineering has two locations in Fort Lauderdale and Vero Beach. For more information call 954-522-6446 or 772-492-1850. Their website is www.tfceng.com.



CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION of South Florida

2929 North West 62nd Street, Ft. Lauderdale, FL., 33309
Phone: 954-974-6333; FAX: 954-974-6633
casf@casf.org

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Construction Focus is the official publication of the Construction Association of South Florida. Article suggestions and submissions for publication consideration should be forwarded to the Executive Vice President.

Calculating the Cost of Distracted Driving

By Brett Frazee, *Enterprise Fleet Management*

Distracted driving not only is a serious problem on the road, it is a major concern for businesses with fleets of vehicles that want to reduce the frequency and severity of accidents and control expenses. Distracted driving can be caused by activities ranging from using a cell phone or texting to eating and drinking, grooming, reading directions, or changing a radio station or MP3 player.

Recent statistics about distracted driving related to the use of cell phones and texting are particularly alarming:

- ◆ Regardless of the texting method - voice-to-text or manual - driver performance suffers equally, according to a study released in April 2013 by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI).

- ◆ The National Safety Council in a study released in May 2013 estimates that 25 percent of all crashes involve cell phone use based on data reported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). However, the National Safety Council believes "the number of crashes involving cell phone use is much greater than what is being reported (because) many factors, from drivers not admitting cell phone use to a lack of consistency in crash reports being

used to collect data at the scene, make it very challenging to determine an accurate number."

- ◆ Finally, a study released by AAA in June 2013 concluded that "talking on a hands-free phone isn't significantly safer for drivers than talking on a hand-held phone and

using hands-free devices that translate speech into text is the most distracting of all."

Besides the inconvenience and expense of taking a vehicle out of service for repairs after an accident, even minor injuries to a driver can become a major concern and disrupt a business' ability to serve customers. A business often can benefit from an annual review of losses that includes cross-referencing accident reports with cell phone records for individual drivers and calculating the extra expenses incurred by not reporting small accidents to its insurance carrier. One of the most effective ways to accomplish this review is with a professional fleet management company that has the experience and expertise to evaluate the total cost of a fleet of vehicles.

Businesses that don't take seriously the problems caused by distracted driving can pay a high price. For example, a vehicle involved in a serious accident could be required to be taken out of service during an investi-

gation from several days to many months, while the business is still required to make payments on the vehicle. In addition, a business involved in a legal dispute resulting from an accident may be subpoenaed to provide detailed documentation such as the driver's statements and possible phone records if the driver is suspected of being on the phone at the time of the accident.

A good place to begin to reduce risks caused by distracted driving is to develop a written policy for all drivers, whether they drive company-owned vehicles or use their own vehicles while on company business.

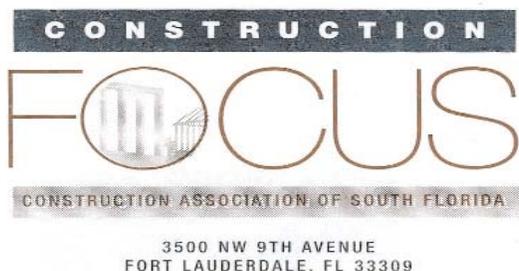
Sample wording may state, "Individuals are encouraged to use their cell phones only when the vehicle is legally parked. The use of cell phones while driving is strongly discouraged in order to practice good defensive driving skills.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, compliance with state and local cell phone laws is required."

According to AAA, industry research indicates there are about 9 million cars and trucks on the road with "infotainment" systems and that will jump to about 62 million by 2018. It's time for everyone to face the reality of distracted driving and take necessary actions to drive responsibly.

Brett Frazee, Vice President for Enterprise Fleet Management can be reached at 954-354-5410. Visit the company's web site at www.efleets.com or call toll free 1-877-23-FLEET.





ROUTE TO:

Safety in Any Language

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- ◆ Encourage participation. Be patient and help employees express their thoughts and questions about the topic.
- ◆ Have employees practice new skills during the training session so that you can see if they've understood.
- ◆ Use feedback when training non-English-speaking employees to confirm comprehension. Also allow extra time for ques-

- tions.
- ◆ Provide handouts in the language or languages trainees speak and read.
- ◆ Follow up on the job to make sure that there have been no misunderstandings and that employees correctly apply what they've learned in training.

Why It Matters

- ◆ According to OSHA, 729 Hispanic or Latino workers were

killed from work-related injuries in 2011.

- ◆ That works out to more than 14 deaths a week, or two Latino workers killed every single day of the year, all year long.
- ◆ Other non-English-speaking workers are a growing presence in the workforce, including those who speak Chinese, Arabic, Vietnamese, and various African languages.

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