

Driving is Taken for Granted

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It makes perfect sense to focus our efforts on providing a safe place to work. So, we concentrate on the usual: fall protection, electrical safety, trenching, etc. Then, we provide training, harnesses, trench boxes, tool box talks, and any other protective devices that we can find. Great! Now our job site is as safe as can be, right? Wrong! What about traveling to and from the job site or driving from job site to job site?

Driving is commonly overlooked by many companies as being a hazard, but it is by far one of the most dangerous tasks that we can perform. There are more than 40,000 people who die and over two million more who suffer disabling injuries each and every year.

You may ask yourself, "Isn't driving just a part of the job?" Well, isn't using a forklift or scaffold just a part of the job? Using these tools requires the worker to be trained, qualified, or even a competent person. We all had to pass a driver's exam to get our driver's license.

How many years ago did we take this exam? Have our skills diminished? Have our physical conditions changed? Have we formed bad habits?

This world is filled with aggressive drivers who are trying to get from point A to point B as fast as they can with little respect for the safety of others. It almost forces us to become more defensive and safer drivers. Being a safe driver can be beneficial in many ways. We can do it to save money on insurance and repairs. We can do it so the company name on the truck doesn't get a bad reputation. Or, we can do it to help ensure that we come home to our family and friends at the end of the day.

In order to remain safe, do things like wear your seatbelt at all times, adjust your mirrors properly, or make sure that your load is tied down. We may have to reduce our speeds, increase our following distances, and be attentive to the road by constantly scanning for hazards.

We may already be safe drivers, but we can only control ourselves and our vehicles. We can't control the aggressive drivers around us, so take safety precautions while driving, just as we do on the job site.