

Traffic Safety News and Facts for Employers March 3, 2006

Michigan News:

Safe Telematic Monitoring

A Michigan computer engineering firm, Applied Computer Technologies, Inc. has developed a customizable solution that fits each individual needs for the telematic functions of your automobile. They have formulated a solution that synchronize all elements of the driving experience into one system thus allowing the driver to concentrate on driving first and foremost, but still allowing the use of cell phone and other computing technologies when the conditions are safe. The technology has lead to the following achievements: implementing order- one telematics activity at a time when driving condition permits; eliminating chaos-no surprising calls at a bad time and no tasks that requires eyes off the road; no tasks that require one or more hands off the wheel even for a second; monitoring driver's vital signs and driving behavior and reaction; helps & manages work load; intelligent help automatically customizable to driver habits, skills and driving purpose. For more information link to: <http://www.actplace.net/Telematics/index.htm> or contact Mr. Naboulsi at manaboulsi@actplace.net

NETS Feature

Underage Drinking Town Hall Meetings

A nationwide series of town hall-style meetings will take place in communities across America on or about March 28, 2006. The purpose of the meetings is to increase the understanding of underage drinking and its consequences, and to encourage individuals, families, and communities to address the problem. The Town Halls will provide the latest research and give communities an opportunity to discuss how they can best prevent underage alcohol use. Anyone can participate, including parents, youth, educators, and representatives from substance abuse prevention, other health entities, justice/law enforcement, highway safety, alcohol control, local government, and business. Please consider attending and participating in these meetings.

Meetings will be held in the following locations in Michigan: Alpena, Auburn Hills, Bad Axe, Battle Creek, Bay City, Bloomfield, Charlevoix, Detroit, Escanaba, Flint, Fremont, Grand Rapids, Houghton, Marquette, Menominee, Midland, Negaunee, Newberry, Petoskey, Saginaw, Southfield, Sterling Heights, Tawas, & Troy. For a link to see who the agency/organization that is facilitating the meeting near you, visit: <http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/townhall/flashmap/eventlist.aspx?id=24>

For more resources for the town hall meetings, visit :
<http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/townhall/> and
<http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov>.

April 6th is National Alcohol Screening Day

To recognize the serious problem of alcohol abuse, April is designated "Alcohol Awareness Month." April 6th marks the annual observance of National Alcohol Screening Day (NASD). At locations across the United States, people can be screened—anonously—to see if their drinking habits may be risky and those with alcohol use problems can be connected with treatment options. Event sites are located in community, college, primary health care, military and employment settings.

...More http://www.trafficsafety.org/newsletter/030106_screeningfeat.asp

Latest Traffic Safety News

Drivers Fail To Heed To Emergency Vehicles

According to some law enforcement officials in Oregon, sirens and lights don't seem to be having the same effect on drivers as they used to. Instead of pulling to the right and stopping at the sight or sound of an emergency vehicle, many drivers keep on driving. As a result, police and firefighters say they are having a more difficult time making their way to emergency calls. Read the full article at

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060214/NEWS/602140314>

Drivers License To Get Technology Upgrade For National ID Program

Motor vehicle agencies might have to link their databases together, and perhaps implant chips in driver's licenses, as necessary as part of a process to implement a national ID card. Technology that may be used for a national ID card could take the form of a chip loaded onto a driver's license, according to the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators. View the full article at

http://news.com.com/Drivers+license+or+national+ID+card/2100-7348_3-6040655.html?tag=nefd.top

68 MPH Speed Limit For Large Trucks Wins Critical Endorsement

The American Trucking Association endorsed a move to limit the maximum speed of large trucks, at the time of manufacture, to 68 mph. The goal of the measure is to reduce the number and severity of speed-related crashes among all vehicles on U.S. highways. It is also part of a comprehensive trucking industry highway safety initiative to produce record low truck fatality rate.

Entertainment Systems Make Strides In Automotive Industry

A new report predicts that increasing demand for new digital entertainment features in the car will result in the automotive multimedia systems market reaching 97 million units by 2012. According to the consumer survey by Automotive Practice, over a third of all new car buyers in the US, France, Germany and the UK intend to purchase an MP3 player in the next 12 months. Joanne Blight, Director in the Automotive Practice, notes, "By far the most significant trend set to hit automotive entertainment in the next 2 years is the rapid adoption of digital music." For more information visit

http://www.strategyanalytics.net/default.aspx?mod=PressRelease_Viewer&a0=2795.

Work/Life:

Georgia Considers Tracking System For Teen Drivers

Lawmakers in Georgia recently debated legislation that would let parents track their teenaged drivers if they violate the rules of the road. The measure would place a "how's my driving" sticker on the back of the teen's car. Parents could also track location and speed of a child's vehicle with a GPS device in the car or on a cell phone. The program would be mandatory for teen drivers with serious violations, like DUI, hit and run, leaving a crash scene or if they were stopped with drugs in their vehicle. Read the full article at http://www.11alive.com/news/news_article.aspx?storyid=76071

Pedestrian Safety Takes Front Seat Among Vehicle Manufacturers

Despite the European New Car Assessment Programme (NCAP) introducing pedestrian protection tests, vehicles in Europe continued to prove dangerous for pedestrians. With 15 percent of the total road fatalities involving pedestrians in Europe during 2002, vehicle manufacturers became increasingly aware of the need for enhanced pedestrian safety systems. Now pedestrian safety systems are in high demand with additional growth expected for the developing active and passive pedestrian safety systems segments. View the full article at <http://www.frost.com/prod/servlet/presentation.jsp?docid=60964787&ctxixpLink=FcmCtx1&ctxixpLabel=FcmCtx2>

New Report Examines Caregiver Use Of Booster Seats

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety has released a report examining the effectiveness of various approaches to encouraging caregivers to put children in booster seats. The study found that parents and caregivers of children are 43 percent more likely to put children in car booster seats once they learn how important booster seats are to child safety and how easy they are to use. The research also found that when booster seats are distributed free of charge and distribution is combined with information about their use and effectiveness, parents and caregivers are more than twice as likely to use car booster seats than they normally would. View the report at <http://www.aaafoundation.org/pdf/BoosterSeatsReport.pdf>

Seattle Bicycling Club Teaches Safety

In 2004, 725 bicyclists were killed and 41,000 injured across America, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. In Seattle, Washington one bicycling club teaches riders the importance of safety. Cascade Bicycle Club teaches classes that are designed to encourage people to take up biking for fun, fitness and transportation. The club's "Urban Cycling" and "Bicycle Commuting" classes show riders how to gear up, stay visible, avoid hazards and crashes, and take evasive maneuvers. Read the full article at http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/getaways/259451_urbancycling16.html.

New Report Focuses On 'Tweens' Seat Belt Use

According to the findings of a new report by the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety, 8- to 12-year-olds are dying at a rate of more than one a day in automobile crashes. In response, safety groups are pushing for more youngsters to remain belted in the back seat. It is recommended that any infant up to 20 pounds ride in a rear-facing child seat and any toddler weighing 20 to 40 pounds ride in a child seat with a harness. A child heavier than 40 pounds but not yet 4 feet 9 inches tall should be in a booster seat. All children are advised to ride in the back seat until age 13. Read the full article at <http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060214/BUSINESS01/602140325/1014>

International Traffic Safety News:

Too Much Information For Drivers?

Drivers are in danger of having crashes because they are being overloaded with information, the UK's RAC Foundation has warned. A clutter of roadway signs and the rising popularity of in-car devices are leading to information overload, according to the foundation. It cites evidence that the average motorist can deal with little more than three pieces of information at one time. As a result, the RAC is calling for a review of roadway signage and urges drivers to plan journeys in advance. View the full article at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4718502.stm

Survey: Fleet Drivers Fail To Implement Basic Vehicle Safety Checks

According a national survey of 180 company car drivers in the UK, most drivers fail to implement the basic vehicle safety checks— and a quarter claim to have received no guidance at all on using cell



phones in cars, a new survey has revealed. The survey also found that a fifth of fleet drivers had never undertaken routine maintenance, such as checking tire pressure or oil and water levels, and a third of those that did only carried out such checks on a quarterly basis.

Study: In-Car Navigational Systems Just As Distracting As Reading A Map

Handling in-car satellite navigation systems is causing motorists to lose concentration on the road, according to a new survey released by Privilege Insurance in England. The insurance company found that the new technology, rather than helping motorists, could be even more distracting than trying to read a map at the wheel. It was found that most motorists would take their eyes off the road for 10 seconds and at 60 miles an hour, that would equate to traveling about the length of three football fields. For more information visit

<http://www.computerworld.com/mobiletopics/mobile/story/0,10801,108871,00.html>

Study Examines Effects Of Text Messaging Among Young Drivers

The Monash University Accident Research Centre in Australia recently conducted a study examining the effects of text messaging on the driving performance of young novice drivers. It found that retrieving and, in particular, sending text messages had a detrimental effect on safe driving. When text messaging, the drivers' ability to maintain their lateral position on the road and to detect and respond appropriately to traffic signs was significantly reduced. In addition, drivers spent up to 400 percent more time with their eyes off the road when text messaging, than when not text messaging. For more information visit <http://www.monash.edu.au/muarc/reports/muarc246.html>

Sophisticated Speed Cameras To Debut In Scotland

Cameras that can measure the average speed of vehicles passing through work zones, will be tested at a site in Scotland. Conventional speed cameras have been criticized for the "bunching effect" that results when drivers slow down to pass the measuring points. These new cameras are more sophisticated and are able to detect if a vehicle increases speed along the measured stretch of the work zone. For more information visit <http://www.worldhighways.com/News/article.cfm?recordID=8705>