Distracted While Walking Meeting Kit



Distracted While Walking (Cellphone Use) Safety Talk

Similar to distracted driving, a person can be distracted while walking if they are deep in thought, or more commonly texting, talking or listening to music while on their mobile phone. Scientists call the phenomenon “inattentive blindness.” The human brain can only adequately focus attention on one task at a time, so when you’re texting or talking on the phone while trying to walk, you cannot give your full attention to both tasks. Each year, more and more people are injured as a result of distracted walking. With the ever-increasing necessity of our mobile phones and smart devices, distracted walking has become a very real and serious problem.

DANGERS OF WALKING

Chewing gum and walking at the same time. Walking and texting at the same time. See the correlation!!!

Distracted walking injuries involving cell phones accounted for an estimated 11,101 injuries between 2000 and 2011, making it a significant safety threat. The trend is so alarming that it was included for the first time in the annual National Safety Council statistical report, Injury Facts, which tracks the leading causes of unintentional injuries and deaths.

Workplace Implications for Distracted Walking

The list of issues distracted walking can create in the workplace is endless. A few basic examples of how using a cellphone while walking at work can lead to injuries include:

- Walking into fixed objects
- Being struck by moving vehicles or equipment
- Walking over an edge or into an open hole
- Tripping over an object
- Walking under a lifted load

Safety Tips

To be safe and alert when walking, keep in mind these important tips:

- If you must use headphones or other electronic devices, maintain a volume where you can still hear the sounds of traffic and your surroundings.
- If you need to talk to a child or the person next to you, make a phone call,

text or other action that could distract you from the goal of getting where you need to go safely, stop and do so away from the pedestrian traffic flow.
- While you walk, focus on the people, objects, and obstacles around you.
- Don’t jaywalk. Cross streets carefully, preferably at a traffic light, remaining cognizant of the pedestrian traffic flow and the cars and bikes in and near the road.
- Look up, not down, especially when stepping off or onto curbs or in the middle of major intersections; and/or when walking or approaching on stairs or escalators.
- Stay alert in mall and other parking lots, and on and near streets, especially during the winter months when it gets dark earlier and drivers are not as likely to see you.

FINAL WORD

Be mindful of your cellphone use both on and off of the job. While research has shown the majority of injuries occur in the home due to distracted walking, the consequences of doing it at work can be much more severe. Work areas and the tasks occurring in them are constantly changing. The last thing you need to be doing is placing all of your focus on the screen of your cellphone.