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Distracted While Walking on a Jobsite

Everyone has seen the commercials and the billboards warning people of the dangers of texting while driving. What about the dangers of using a cellphone while walking?

There are many videos online of individuals who are distracted while walking and end up injured.

While some of these videos can be innocent and funny, the consequences of this unsafe act can be severe.

Distracted While Walking Injuries:

Injuries caused by being distracted due to using a cellphone while walking have become so common that National Safety Council has added "distracted walking" as a category in their statistical report Injury Facts. This report tracks data around the leading causes of unintentional injuries and deaths.

Other researchers have been looking at the details of these injuries. Some of their findings include:

- 52% of distracted walking incidents involving cell phones happen at home
- 68% of those injured are women
- 54% are people ages 40 or younger

Recent injury statistics that show the total number of injuries due to distracted walking are hard to come by. One study conducted by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission shows that in 2011, a total of 1,152 people of all ages were treated in hospital emergency rooms in the U.S. for injuries sustained while walking and using a cell phone or other electronic device.

As you can imagine these numbers are higher now due to increased smartphone use.

Implications of Distracted Walking at a Jobsite:

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

Summary:

Be mindful of your cellphone use both on and off the job.

While research has shown most 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 your focus on the screen of your cellphone.