

Motor Vehicle Incidents

What are motor vehicle incidents?

In the past 20 years, the number of Ontario citizens who died or were injured as a result of motor vehicle incidents (MVI s) has been trending downwards, making our province a road safety leader in North America. Yet, according to the WSIB (2005-2009):

- motor vehicle collisions on Ontario roads are the greatest single cause of, and accounted for more than 30% of all Ontario worker fatalities—making MVI s the biggest risk Ontarians face each day they go to work;
- this number increases to 45% when we include powered industrial vehicles or powered mobile industrial equipment in the workplace; i.e. vehicles used to lift and move material, such as forklifts, pallet trucks, walkie stackers and scissor lifts.



What the law says

Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) requires that employers take every reasonable precaution to protect workers, provide information and instruction, and ensure that workers properly use or wear the required equipment. Employers, supervisors and workers can be prosecuted for not complying with the law.

How motor vehicle safety affects your business

In 2007, the Ministry of Transportation shared information relevant to all businesses*:

- 765 people were killed and more than 67,000 injured as a result of motor vehicle incidents on our roads and in our workplaces
- These numbers represent 8.6 fatalities and 750 injuries for every 100,000 licensed drivers in Ontario
- On an average day in Ontario, motor vehicle collisions will kill more than two people and injure more than 180 others

*Source: Ontario Road Safety Annual Report, 2007

Here are the four major factors leading to these fatalities:

1. drinking and driving: 27% of total fatalities
2. large truck crashes: 22%
3. driver speed: 21%
4. unbelted occupants: 20%

These are the top three driver conditions and actions that contribute to fatal collisions:

1. impairment as a result of alcohol or drugs
2. being inattentive (e.g., from fatigue or distractions)
3. aggressive behaviour, such as driving too fast

What you can do

As an employer:

- If you have workers that drive for your business, put policies and procedures in place to promote responsible driving.
- Reward sustained responsible driving.
- Monitor workplace driving to ensure that your workers are following your policies and procedures.

As a driver

- *Slow down*: drive within the speed limit and adjust your speed for weather and road conditions. Follow vehicles at a safe distance.
- *Relax*: in stressful driving conditions, take a deep breath and relax. An aggressive state of mind will come through in your driving behaviour.
- *Stay alert*: don't drive until you are mentally and physically able to. If you become drowsy or uncomfortable, pull over immediately and take a break.
- *Plan ahead*: plan your route before you start out. If you're unfamiliar with where you're going, check your map or plot the route with GPS, before you start off.
- *Buckle up*: wearing a seat belt is the law and it could end up saving your life. Wearing your seat belt properly will dramatically increase your chances of surviving a motor vehicle collision. If you are the driver, ensure all children 16 years and under are properly secured.
- *Don't drink and drive*: refuse to ride with someone who may be impaired. Plan ahead: choose a designated driver before going out or set some money aside for a taxi.