



# Safety Talk

## Work-related driving



*Motor vehicle incidents (MVIs) are the biggest cause of workplace fatalities for IHSA member firms. In 2012, 14 workers from the sectors served by IHSA lost their lives in motor vehicle-related incidents on the job.\**

### Explain dangers

Work-related driving is defined as “driving activities undertaken by staff in the course of their work.” If workers drive as part of their work, employers have the same duty to protect them from this hazard as from any other workplace hazard. This applies even if workers are using their own vehicles.

In Ontario, MVIs are one of the leading causes of workplace injuries and fatalities. To protect workers from hazards related to MVIs, employers should have a safe-driving policy and program for their company and communicate it to all workers.

### Identify controls

- Follow the health and safety procedures in your company’s safe-driving policy.
- Make sure you have a valid driver’s licence that is appropriate for the class of vehicle you will drive.
- Check to make sure that any vehicle you drive is properly insured and in good working condition. All vehicles should be inspected, serviced, and maintained regularly.
- Seatbelts save lives. Buckle up any time you operate a vehicle or a piece of mobile equipment. If it has a seatbelt, you are legally required to use it.
- Check to see if there are other workers or equipment around the vehicle before starting the engine or putting the vehicle in motion. Use a signaller when your intended path of travel is not clear or when you have to back up at a busy worksite.
- Do not drive if you feel physically or mentally unable to do so. Take a rest break or tell your employer you can’t drive safely.

- Follow safe storage practices. Documents, bags, tools, and other equipment or materials should be stored properly and restrained in case of sudden braking or a collision. Make sure there’s enough trunk space to hold your material. Install storage equipment inside the vehicle if necessary.
- Try not to drive in bad weather or at night. If you must do so, adjust your driving to account for the weather (fog, rain, snow, etc.) or darkness.
- Adjust the seats, steering wheel, mirrors, etc. so that they fit your size and your driving needs.
- Turn the engine off and make sure the vehicle can’t move before you get in or out.
- If your work vehicle is equipped with an emergency kit, check it regularly and make sure you know how to use it.
- Do not use a cell phone or start doing work activities until you have turned off the engine and parked the vehicle in a safe place where it can’t move, and until all workers are either at a safe distance from the vehicle or inside it.
- Let your employer know if the work you’re doing or your schedule prevents you from obeying the speed limit or the hours of service regulations.

### Demonstrate

Ask workers if they have any concerns about driving as part of their job. Ask if they have received training in defensive driving. Discuss what they learned in the course.

[All workers should know how to drive defensively. If they have not been trained, register them for IHSA’s *Defensive Driving* course. Give them IHSA’s safety talk on *Defensive Driving—Highway Traffic.*]

\*Statistics were provided by the Ontario Ministry of Labour—eight fatalities were classified as MVIs and six as pedestrian workers being struck by a motor vehicle.