

CELL PHONE USE

A FOCUS ON SAFETY

Cell phone use while driving is considered a serious and potentially deadly distraction to safe vehicle operations. Federal Motor Carrier regulations now ban texting while operating a commercial vehicle. In addition to being addressed by state legislators, it is of paramount importance to your insurance exposure to forbid cell phone operation while the vehicle is in motion. For these reasons, Custom Harvest Insurance, LTD is recommending the following policy guidelines for adoption into your employee manual.

Company Cell Phone Use Policy:

- Employees shall not be allowed to use or possess personal cell phones or laptop computers/tablets while in the cab of a truck or while operating any machinery. These devices should be left in the employee living quarters or collected at the beginning of each work day and returned during lunch, breaks, or at the end of the work day.
- Communications between vehicles and equipment should be carried out using company provided mobile radios. Cell phones should not be used for this purpose. However, if a cell phone is needed for communication between company vehicles, a company cell phone should be issued with restrictions on the numbers the phone can call.
- When it is necessary for management or a designated employee to use a cell phone or radio while operating a vehicle or machinery, any call or conversation requiring more than a simple yes or no response should not continue until the vehicle is parked in a safe location along the roadside or in the field.
- Establish an emergency notification procedure so that all employees are given the cell phone

number of the field supervisor/foreman as an emergency contact number. With this procedure established, employees should be instructed that anyone needing to contact them in an emergency can call the field supervisor and the message will be relayed to the employee.

- Employees found using a personal cell phone or having a personal cell phone in a company vehicle can be disciplined up to and including termination.

These guidelines should be re-written to better fit your employee manual, and make sure the policy is ready to go when your employees arrive. The owner of the business should also sign the statement so that every employee knows the owner endorses and follows these rules. Your policy statement should also have consequences established for violation of policy up to and including termination. Each employee should read and sign your policy statement. The signed statement should go in the employee's personnel folder.

Emphasize during the initial employee meeting that any accident caused by or involving cell phone usage while operating a vehicle can leave to the loss of your company's insurance and will not be tolerated.



Custom Harvest Insurance, Ltd.

SAFETY FIRST—CELL PHONE USE DOES NOT MIX WITH AN OPERATING VEHICLE.