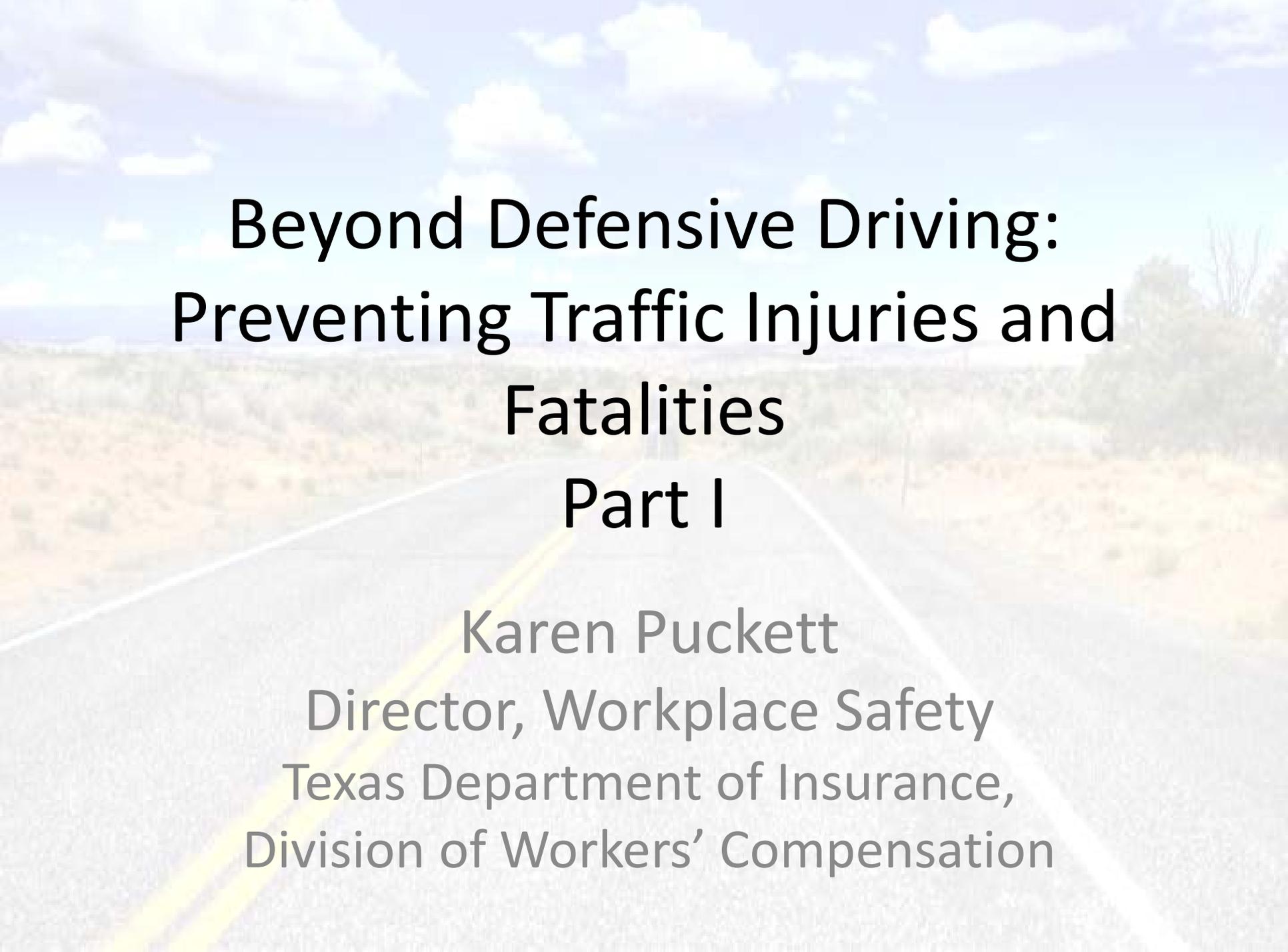


TEXAS WORKERS' COMPENSATION  
**Education Conference**





# Beyond Defensive Driving: Preventing Traffic Injuries and Fatalities Part I

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# Driving in Texas

- No deathless days in 2015
- 3,531 people died

	<b>476</b>	people died in crashes involving distracted driving
	<b>40.3%</b>	of the people who died in vehicles were not wearing restraints
	<b>52%</b>	of motorcyclists who died were not wearing helmets
	<b>960</b>	people died in DUI crashes

Source: Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)



# Objectives

- Understand why employers should focus on transportation safety.
- Understand employer considerations when formulating an effective driving safety program:
  - The roadway workplace
  - The driver
  - The vehicle
  - The environment
- Learn about available resources to help establish and assess driving safety programs.

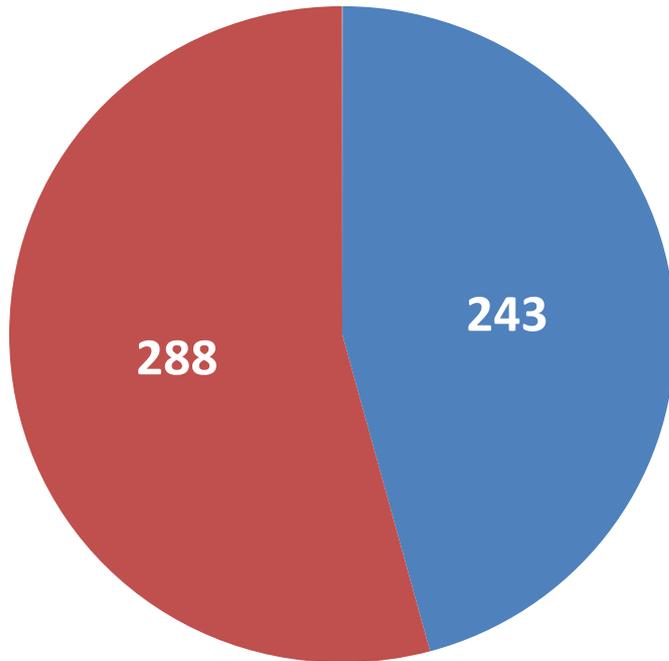
# Focus on Transportation

- Transportation incidents are the leading cause of work-related fatal injuries.
- A variety of industries and occupations require employees to drive or be exposed to hazards associated with driving.
- Roadways and work zones are likely the most dangerous part of their work environment.



# Texas Statistics

Fatal Occupational Injuries, 2014



- Transportation Incidents
- All Other Events

- Transportation incidents were involved in 46% (243 out of 531) of fatal occupational injuries in Texas in 2014.

# Texas Statistics

- 56% of the transportation incidents involved occupations other than motor vehicle operators.
- An estimated 3,980 non-fatal transportation incidents involved days away from work.



# Employers Limiting Their Risk

- DWC encourages employers to:
  - Implement effective accident prevention plans that address driving and vehicular hazards.
  - Implement and enforce written safety programs and policies for working in and around motor vehicles.
  - Review and improve the occupational driving safety program on an annual basis or whenever changes occur.



# Employer Considerations

- The Roadway Workplace
  - Consider the vehicle and road as part of the workplace.
- The Driver
  - Recognize that driver behavior, skills, and physical conditions affect driving.
- The Vehicle
  - Ensure proper vehicle maintenance and operations.
- The Environment
  - Acknowledge that conditions outside the vehicle affect travel.



Driver Policies and Safety Programs

Motor Vehicle Record Checks

Driver Assessment

Journey Management

Applicable Laws

# **THE ROADWAY WORKPLACE**

# Driver Policies and Safety Programs

- An effective driving accident prevention plan should:
  - Specify qualifications for employees driving on the job.
  - Include policy statements related to the various elements of the plan.
- Considerations for qualified drivers include:
  - Valid driver license
  - Minimum number of moving violation convictions on driving record
  - Driving skills assessment



# Driver Policies and Safety Programs

- Specify qualifications for both commercial and non-commercial drivers in employment policies.



# Motor Vehicle Record Checks

- Review driver license status, driving records of employees operating motor vehicles as part of their job.
- Check driver motor vehicle records at pre-hire and after to assess employee driving behavior.



# Driver Assessment

- Options to assess driving skills include:
  - Pre-hire driver screening tests
  - In-vehicle monitoring systems
  - Driver observation
  - Shadowing with drivers familiar with specialized motor vehicle operations



# Journey Management

- Necessity and risk of each work-related trip should be assessed.
- Minimize travel where possible.
- If employee must drive, choose the safest:
  - Route
  - Time of day
  - Vehicle
  - Environmental conditions



# Applicable Laws

- Employers should ensure that their programs and policies comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.



Distracted Driving

Seat Belt Use

Impaired Driving

Fatigue

Wellness/Fit to Drive

Driving Training



**THE DRIVER**

# Distracted Driving

- Alert and focused drivers are critical in preventing motor vehicle collisions.
- Any activity besides driving is considered a distraction.
- Employers should be aware of and incorporate local jurisdictional laws.



# Distracted Driving (cont.)

- Distractions include (but are not limited to):
  - Use of electronic mobile devices for calling, texting, or watching
  - Eating
  - Drinking
  - Smoking
  - Reading
  - Applying makeup or other grooming activities
  - Reaching for items
  - Focusing on other passengers
  - Distractions outside the vehicle



# Seat Belt Use

- Every employee in a motorized vehicle should wear proper restraint.
- In 2014, TxDOT reported 2,587 crashes occurred in Texas where unrestrained vehicle occupants sustained fatal or serious injuries.
- Wearing a seat belt helps avoid occupant ejections in a crash; increases chances of surviving by 45% in cars and by 60% in trucks.



# Impaired Driving

- Driving skills can be affected by:

- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Prescription drugs
- Over-the-counter medications



- Employers should consider drug and alcohol testing for all employees who drive.



# Fatigue

- Fatigued driving can be as dangerous as impaired driving.
- Reaction times are diminished and drivers can fall asleep quickly.
- Avoid unnecessary travel or make alternate arrangements.



# Fatigue

- ***Employers*** should consider effects of working long shifts or evening/night shifts when making driving assignments.
- ***Employees*** should understand the importance of getting enough restful sleep.



# Wellness/Fitness to Drive

- While some driver licenses require medical assessments, any employee operating a motor vehicle should be able to perform the task effectively.
- The abilities to see, hear, react, and maneuver are important for safe driving.



# Driver Training

- Train employees driving on the job in all aspects of the company's driving program.
- Training should explain risks of driving and that the vehicle and roadways are considered part of the workplace.



# Driver Training (cont.)

- Minimum training recommendations:
  - Employer's driving policies
  - Seat belt use
  - Distracted driving
  - Impaired driving
  - Fatigued/fit driving
  - Operating and maneuvering the type of vehicle they will be driving
  - Sharing the road
  - Aggressive driving
  - Defensive driving
  - Avoiding rear-end collisions
  - Avoiding backing and related collisions
  - Driving in adverse weather and road conditions
  - Vehicle maintenance



Operating Different Types of Motor Vehicles  
Vehicle Maintenance



# THE VEHICLE

# Operating Various Types of Motor Vehicles

- Employees who drive should exhibit skills and/or be trained in operating the types of vehicle(s) that they use for work.



# Operating Various Types of Motor Vehicles

- Employees should understand the maneuverability and capabilities of other vehicles on the road.
- Examples:
  - Commercial motor vehicles
  - Utility vehicles
  - Passenger vehicles
  - Heavy equipment
  - Motorcycles



# Vehicle Maintenance

- Employers that provide motorized vehicles for employees should have vehicle maintenance programs.
- Maintenance programs include:
  - Inspections
  - Repairs
  - Preventative maintenance



# Vehicle Maintenance (cont.)

- Employers should consider the condition of personal vehicles that employees drive while working.



Adverse Weather Conditions

Work Zone Safety

Road Conditions

Other Drivers



# THE ENVIRONMENT

# Adverse Weather Conditions

- Inclement weather affects both driver reaction time and vehicle performance.
- Drivers should check weather forecasts before a trip and avoid driving in inclement weather, if possible.



# Work Zone Safety

- Vehicles used in and near work zones should have markings and lights to make them visible to other employees and motorists in the work zone.
- Work zones should be adequately marked with signage to inform those traveling in or near the zone of what to expect.



- Employees traveling through work zones should remain alert to roadway changes and follow all speed limits and directional signage.



# Work Zone Safety (cont.)

- Employees who work in work zones are particularly vulnerable to hazards of moving motorized vehicles in roadways and the work zones.
- Employees should wear high visibility personal protective equipment (PPE).



# Road Conditions

- The surface, structure, and stability of roadways can cause hazards.
- Uneven lanes, potholes, closed shoulders, road grading, and other changes can be dangerous if the driver is unprepared.



# Other Drivers

- An effective occupational driving safety program prepares employees for encountering bad driving habits of others.
- Anticipating other motorists' actions, avoiding aggressive drivers, and driving defensively help reduce the risk of driving on the job.



# Where to Find Help

- Your workers' compensation insurance company
- TxDOT
  - [www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/traffic/safety.html](http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/traffic/safety.html)
- National Safety Council's Our Driving Concern
  - [www.nsc.org/safety\\_road/Employer Traffic Safety/Pages/TexasLanding.aspx](http://www.nsc.org/safety_road/Employer Traffic Safety/Pages/TexasLanding.aspx)

# Where to Find Help (cont.)

- TDI-DWC
  - [www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/index.html](http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/index.html)
  - <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/drivesafe.html>
  - (512) 804-4610
  - [safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov)
- Extensive compilation of various resources available to Texas employers, across industries

# Questions?