

Defensive Driving and Blind Spots

Dear NETS Members,

November 2, 2010

Lee Wallace of PSEG submitted a question regarding defensive driving and blind spots.

Member responses follow Lee's full questions, below.

Please contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Thank you to those who provided responses.

Yours truly,

Jack Hanley

NETS

Executive Director

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QUESTION

We've conducted various classroom driver training programs provided by (third party trainers). We've done some behind the wheel training, too. Our drivers operate vehicles from cars to large vehicles, such as flat bed trucks, aerial lift buckets, etc., in highly populated areas with lots of traffic congestion. We've installed additional mirrors on our larger vehicles to remove blind spots *but are still plagued with motor vehicle collisions*.

What programs have you implemented that showed a step change in associate's defensive driving habits?

Any experience in programs targeting blind spots? If so, what were they?

Lee Wallace

PSEG

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	RESPONSES	
1	Spectra Energy Kevin Wright KPWright@spectraenergy.com	<p>Our recently implemented programs have not produced a step change in defensive driving habits that has been evident through statistical analysis. Implemented behaviour-based training sessions in 2007 but still trending flat year to date.</p> <p>No programs targeting blind spots specifically</p>
2	Anonymous	<p>First, what kind of crashes are occurring and have you been able to determine root cause?</p> <p>Can crashes be attributed to blind spots or are they related to a different driver behavior? Sideswipe crashes are often a symptom of poorly designed or inadequate mirror systems, failure to properly adjust adequate mirror systems, or driver behavior related to improper mirror scanning and lane changes.</p> <p>Have your drivers been instructed in proper mirror adjustment? If they have, are your mirror systems maintained so that the mirrors can be adjusted without having to use tools? (i.e., have the mirrors been affected by corrosion to the point that they cannot be adjusted?) Have you observed and measured driver mirror adjustment behavior to determine percentage of drivers who "do it right? I'm certainly willing to share Liberty Mutual's mirror adjustment reference material for all sizes of vehicles.</p> <p>The following controls are related to crashes occurring when leaving parked positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have your drivers been trained in the GOAL principle prior to leaving a parked position? (Get Out And Look) If so, have you measured (by observation) if they actually do what is expected? • Have you considered requiring that traffic cones be placed both in front and at the rear of parked vehicles necessitating the driver to retrieve the cones prior to leaving parked position? • Are your drivers required to back into parking positions to avoid having to back out of a parking spot into traffic? <p>Is distraction an issue? Is your policy regarding in-vehicle communications devices enforced?</p> <p>From the sounds of it, you may not have a problem that training can solve - you may have a driver behavior issue that requires management enforcement. As we often say, if drivers know HOW to drive safely, but choose not to, organizations have a management problem, not a training one.</p>

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RESPONSES

3	<p>Sunoco Bill Sanicky WMSANICKY@sunocoinc.com</p>	<p>(A third party vendor) has a great program called "Slow speed maneuvers" This is both classroom and practical training. You physically take a driver and place them behind the wheel in a parking lot and show them how large an area the blind spot is. As well you place cones to see how close they can back up to or pull up to without hitting them. Finally you look to see if the driver has a fixed stare which reduces his or her field of vision.</p>
4	<p>Ryder System Bob Prim rprim@ryder.com</p>	<p>Fender mirrors help eliminate blind spots on larger vehicles. Also Mirror check stations help Drivers set their mirrors correctly.</p>
5	<p>Forest Pharmaceuticals Deb Burns DBurns@forestpharm.com</p>	<p>This is not a large problem in our fleet. On-line and behind the wheel training seem to get the point across.</p>
6	<p>AstraZeneca Mary Rose mary.rose@astrazeneca.com</p>	<p>We have seen a lot of success in putting our managers through one-day "evaluator" training with Smith Systems. This training teaches the manager how to critique the driving performance of their direct reports. Because the manager is intimately knowledgeable about the Smith System 5-keys, when they do ride-alongs or even when they coach their employee around driver safety, they can effectively communicate the Smith System 5-key concepts. All of our drivers also go through driver training with Smith System as well. While the training gives both the manager and driver a common language, the Smith System's most successful philosophy is space + time = collision avoidance. Since implementation of the training program for managers, we see managers taking more ownership for the safety performance of their teams. The managers are setting expectations for the performance of their employees and as a result we are seeing greater awareness of driver safety and our preventable collision numbers have been improving</p>
7	<p>Pfizer Teri Snow theresa.l.snow@pfizer.com</p>	<p>Our step change has been seen because of the accountability processes we have put in place. We specially recognize the excellent drivers who are the majority and hold 1.5% high risk drivers accountable for their choices. This means they are put on notice to make change within 12 months and lose changes for promotions and bonuses during that time. The program has teeth and our US drivers understand this. Note: this is a US program approach when allowed by work councils we are taking similar approaches globally.</p>