



June 22 — Where Is Your Attention?

<p>Large offsite crane operator driving a very large crane down main road using a cell phone while driving sometimes with both hands easily crossing the center line with this extra-large crane. Very much distracted</p>	<p>Waved at them with no attention given as they were not paying attention to their surroundings. They eventually drove into the plant far from where I was at. Hopefully no longer on their phone while driving breaking state law and customers rules.</p>
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Most distracted driving incidents don't start with bad intentions. Nobody gets behind the wheel planning to take a risk. It starts with a quick glance. A text message. A phone call.

A notification that seems important at the moment.

An employee observed a large offsite crane operator driving down Waconia while using a cell phone. According to the observation, the operator appeared distracted, at times using both hands on the phone while the crane crossed the center line of the roadway. Attempts were made to get the operator's attention, but they continued driving and eventually entered the plant.

The size of the equipment makes this observation particularly concerning. Unlike a passenger vehicle, large cranes require additional space to maneuver, have significant blind spots, and can cause severe consequences if control is lost. Even a brief lapse in attention can create hazards for pedestrians, nearby vehicles, and anyone working in the area.

One of the challenges with distraction is that most people believe they can divide their attention without affecting their performance. The reality is that our brains don't multitask nearly as well as we think. Instead, attention shifts back and forth between tasks, creating moments where hazards go unnoticed and reaction times increase.

Driving requires constant awareness of changing conditions. Every second spent looking at a phone is a second spent not looking at the road, the equipment, or the people around you.

The employee who observed this behavior recognized the risk immediately. While they were unable to make contact with the driver, the observation serves as an important reminder that operating equipment demands our full attention.

Hazards

- Distracted driving
- Vehicle collisions
- Struck by incidents
- Pedestrian exposure
- Loss of vehicle control
- Reduced reaction time

Words of Wisdom

The message, phone call, or notification can wait. When operating vehicles or equipment, nothing deserves more attention than the environment around you.

Pause and Think

- What are the most common distractions employees face while driving or operating equipment?
- Why do people often believe they can safely use a phone while driving?
- How does distraction affect reaction time and hazard recognition?
- What steps can you take to eliminate distractions before operating equipment?
- How would you address distracted driving if you observed it in your work area?

Closing Thought

Where your eyes go, your attention follows. Where your attention goes, your safety follows.