

# SafetyToolboxTopics

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## Death By Cell Phone

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Cell phones can be a great convenience and a great tool . . . however their use at inappropriate times and inappropriate places can certainly be risky.

In British Columbia Canada a new road was being preloaded with sand and gravel. An engineer walked across a dump truck staging area next to the road while talking on his cell phone. A spotter was using hand signals to direct a loaded dump truck backwards along the staging area. The truck driver was maintaining visual contact with the spotter in his side-view mirror. The dump truck's backup alarm was working normally. Two or three similar backup alarms were also sounding from other nearby mobile equipment.

The spotter turned away from the dump truck for about 10 seconds to check for other vehicles. He continued to motion the dump truck to reverse, without maintaining visual contact with it. During this 10-second interval, the engineer stepped onto the staging area between the spotter and the reversing dump truck. Still talking on the cell phone, he stopped directly behind the reversing vehicle with his back to it. The driver could not see the engineer and continued to reverse as directed by the spotter. The spotter did not see the engineer.

The engineer was unaware that the dump truck was approaching. One of the dump truck's rear tires snagged the back of the engineer's leg, pulling him under the truck. He died from his injuries.

This is one of the reasons we don't allow cell phone use out in the production areas when working on the equipment. It only takes a second or two for distractions to take a fatal turn.

The National Safety Council has gotten behind a complete ban on all cell phone use while driving. Cleveland, Ohio recently banned texting while driving with fines up to \$500 for third-time offenders.

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on \_\_\_\_\_ with the following employees: