



Workplace Safety Report:

Reduce risk for employees and protect your bottom line with technology

Workplace safety is top of mind for many Canadian small businesses, but is especially concerning to field services companies in areas such as energy, construction and transportation that have workers on the road and in remote and high-risk environments every day. With many provinces implementing legislation around employee safety in the field, employers should take a proactive approach to securing their most important company asset – their people.

By not taking the necessary steps to help protect employees, business owners also run the risk of incurring high costs that can harm the financial health of the company. Beyond the dollars and cents, many employees of small businesses have blood relations while others become like family. Improving communications between the office and field workers offers managers better visibility into their workforce, resulting in overall improved safety for field workers and increased productivity. One way to do this is by using simple Web-based applications and equipping staff with wireless solutions that keep workers connected and protected.

Financial impact of workplace injuries

Accidents and injuries in the workplace have direct and indirect costs to a business that is not only devastating to employees but can also affect a company's reputation and bottom line. In 2007, the Ontario Ministry of Labour cited that the monetary equivalent of lost time due to injury and illness in Ontario averaged \$21,300, and indicated these expenses added to a business' operating costs and profit margin.

Direct costs include loss of life and injuries, workers' compensation payments, medical expenses, and costs for legal services; indirect costs include training replacement employees, accident investigation and implementation of corrective measures, lost productivity and repairs of damaged equipment and property. Today, many federal and provincial Labour Boards have tools available to small business owners to help them gauge the costs associated with accidents in the workplace. For example, according to the Worksafe BC Small Business Safety calculator*, a rollover accident in the trucking industry can cost a company over \$15,000 in investigation costs, property damage and replacement costs and can take up to 345 days in revenue recovery time. Costs like these can be reduced with the right technology that helps managers regulate speeds and monitor workers' performance while in the field.

*Source: <http://www.worksafebc.com>

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Creating a safety net

Destiny Resources Services Corp. is an Alberta-based Seismic front-end services company that manages approximately 100 vehicles that cover an average of 4.5 million kilometres a year. With workers dispersed across a vast geography, Destiny Resources was experiencing a spike in accidents and damages due to speeding and dangerous road conditions. Managers were looking for an efficient way to decrease the number of incidents in the field and lower overall fuel costs.

As a result, Destiny Resources implemented the TELUS Fleet Tracker solution to improve worker safety by monitoring driver speeds. TELUS Fleet Tracker uses in-vehicle installed Global Positioning System (GPS) modems to provide the company with real-time vehicle information including location, travel speed, idling time and distances traveled. Through the modem sensors, managers have a clear view into the status of the vehicles' battery voltage and ignition on/off position to help reduce the number of vehicle breakdowns that can happen on the road.

By implementing TELUS Fleet Tracker in every vehicle, Destiny Resources was able to reduce overall speed limits from 130 km/hour to an average of 115 km/hour. TELUS Fleet Tracker sends e-mail updates to the head office when drivers exceed the set speed limit, providing managers with a way to regulate speeds while workers are in the field. As a result of reducing speed limits, Destiny Resources saved approximately \$250,000 per year in fuel costs and up to \$20,000 in maintenance costs on vehicle wear and tear. Beyond cost reduction, TELUS Fleet Tracker has also provided Destiny Resources with customized real-time maintenance reports, which contributes to the overall safety of its employees.

Solutions for enhancing workplace safety

The Canadian National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has found that workers are at an increased risk when working alone, in small groups, very early in the morning or late at night. For instance, in British Columbia and Alberta, the Work Alone legislation requires employers to take all necessary precautions to protect the safety of their workers by identifying potential safety risks, eliminating or controlling them, and refining communication among workers to notify them of these hazards. So how can small business owners ensure their employees are safe when working in the field?

TELUS Alert and Assist is a personal safety solution tailored to field workers whose isolation or workplace circumstances put them at a heightened physical risk while on the job.

TELUS Alert and Assist, when paired with Bluetooth on a BlackBerry®, enables remote workers to proactively signal an emergency by using a pendant with an alert button and can also detect when there is no motion. With this solution, organizations can monitor the safety of remote workers and respond to emergency situations in real-time through an on-demand and easy-to-use Web application.

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Wireless solutions such as Mike® Push To Talk® (PTT), allow workers to instantly communicate safety concerns with a team member or the entire crew with a push of a button. Having work-safe equipment is important, and many don't realize the wireless devices they use to make their job more productive can produce sparks, potentially igniting fuels and causing explosions. Mike is the only Canadian provider of rugged, intrinsically safe Motorola® handsets with PTT for workers in the utility, petrochemical and industrial sectors. For instance, Mike handsets such as the i365is are designed to have low electrical and thermal output, which eliminates the risk of producing sparks and, therefore, enhances worker safety.

Small businesses can also improve worker safety with TELUS Tracking and Dispatch solutions to gain visibility into the activities and locations of their mobile workers and assets. For example, TELUS Asset Tracker enables businesses to use real-time tracking to recover stolen vehicles and valuable assets which can help companies protect their investments and save on additional costs.

Selecting the right solutions

By helping staff overcome communication barriers, Web-based applications and wireless solutions enable small businesses with field workers to enhance the effectiveness and safety of their mobile workforce, and manage the direct and indirect costs associated with accidents and incidents in the workplace. Businesses that need help finding the right solutions can take advantage of the TELUS Wireless Solutions Roadmap. This tool helps companies understand how wireless technology can enhance their business, compare their wireless business value against their peers, and create a personalized assessment.

To access the TELUS Wireless Solutions Roadmap and learn more about TELUS' solutions for field services companies, visit telus.com/fieldservices.

NOTE: TELUS Alert and Assist is only available in TELUS wireless coverage areas in Canada within range of a wireless handset if the product and handset have enough power to operate. See telusmobility.com for coverage maps. Client is responsible for monitoring of the service and for alert response. Not for use in high-availability applications or high risk operations. ©2009 TELUS, Mike, the Mike logo, and Push To Talk are trademarks used under license from the TELUS Corporation. Research in Motion Limited. All rights Reserved. The BlackBerry and RIM families of related marks, images and symbols are the exclusive properties of and trademarks of Research in Motion Limited. MOTOROLA and the Stylized M Logo are registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office, and are the property of Motorola Inc.