



KENTUCKY
AGC Self Insurers' Fund

Distraction on the Jobsite: Phones, Radios, Multitasking, and Situational Awareness

Construction work demands constant attention. Conditions change quickly, equipment is always moving, and a moment of distraction can lead to serious injuries or fatalities. Whether the distraction comes from a cell phone, a radio conversation, or trying to do too many things at once, losing awareness of your surroundings puts everyone at risk.

Common Sources of Distraction

Distractions can come from many sources, including:

- Personal cell phone calls, texts, social media, or notifications
- Lengthy or unnecessary radio conversations
- Multitasking during critical work
- Rushing to meet production schedules
- Fatigue, stress, or mental preoccupation
- Conversations that draw attention away from nearby hazards

Maintain Situational Awareness

Situational awareness means recognizing what is happening around you, identifying hazards, and anticipating what could happen next. Before starting any task, ask yourself:

- What hazards are around me?
- What could change in the next few minutes?
- Where are nearby workers and equipment?
- Do I have a safe escape route?

Reduce Distractions

Simple habits help maintain focus:

- Save personal phone use for breaks or emergencies.
- Keep radio communication brief, clear, and work related.
- Stop before reading or sending a message.
- Focus on one critical task at a time whenever possible.
- Pause before entering active work zones or crossing equipment paths.
- If distracted, stop, refocus, and reassess before continuing.

Supervisors Lead by Example

Supervisors should establish clear expectations for phone use, minimize unnecessary radio traffic, move lengthy discussions away from active work areas, and encourage workers to speak up when they notice distractions. Reinforce that taking a moment to regain focus is always the safer choice.

Stay Focused. Stay Safe.

Every worker shares responsibility for maintaining a safe jobsite. Staying alert, limiting distractions, communicating clearly, and watching for changing conditions help prevent incidents before they occur.

Remember: A few seconds of focused attention can prevent a lifetime of consequences.