

SAFETYFIRST

INFORMATION DEDICATED TO DRIVER SAFETY



AHEAD OF
THE CURVE



Cottingham & Butler
Safety Management
Services Company, 2007

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Be Safe Out There

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Accident Scene Photography Tips

The old saying, "A picture is worth a thousand words," is especially true when talking about taking photos at the scene of an accident. Over the past years, many motor carriers have been issuing disposable cameras to each driver so they can document evidence from an accident scene. If your company does not already issue a camera, the small investment for a disposable camera with flash is one of the best career decisions you can make.

Documenting an Accident Scene

Often times, carriers that do issue cameras do not always provide instruction to their drivers on how to properly document an accident scene. Without proper understanding of accident scene photography, the driver runs the risk of not taking the photos needed to document crucial evidence, or he/she may take photos that can be used against the carrier in a court of law.

Use the following tips when photographing an accident scene:

- ❖ Shoot all available pictures on the roll of film at an accident scene--that one extra picture may hold key evidence to protect you and your company.
- ❖ Photograph all damaged areas and undamaged areas of all vehicles. Photograph a close-up of all damages and then take another picture from farther away.
- ❖ Do not forget to photograph the license plates of all vehicles involved in the accident, as well as those that may have been a witness to the crash. Take the photos close enough so that you can read the plate and identify the vehicle associated with it.
- ❖ Photograph the accident scene from all four corners. Be sure to photograph all skid marks and/or gouge marks in the pavement, while also including in the photograph a point of reference such as a light-pole, street signs, buildings, or other permanent landmarks.
- ❖ DO NOT take photos of anyone who has been injured or is deceased as a result of the accident. Do not photograph scene of blood or gore that may occur.

Disposable Cameras

Disposable cameras are available with a variety of film speeds and number of exposures, and can be purchased with or without a flash. It is recommended that you choose a disposable camera with 27 exposures, 1000 speed film, and a flash. This will allow the best quality photos, especially during low-light conditions.

Act Immediately

After you have taken photographs of the accident, attempt to deliver the camera immediately to your safety manager or other management representative for processing.

We hope you never have to use the camera you are carrying, but it could save a driver's career when necessary!