



## Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation

Prevention through comprehensive research and investigation

### INVESTIGATION/RESEARCH

### INJURY PREVENTION STRATEGIES FOR OLDER DRIVERS

*MIFACE Case #02MI160: 69-year old male semi-truck driver was killed while driving a tractor-trailer with a double tank on an interstate highway. Near an exit ramp, the tractor-trailer drove off of the roadway to the right and tried to re-enter. The vehicle's right side tires entered the gravel shoulder; the vehicle began to rotate in a counter clockwise direction and struck a guardrail.*

From 2001-2004, 42 work-related fatal transportation incidents occurred in Michigan. Of these 42 deaths, ten (10) individuals (24%) who died were 60 years of age or older. Older drivers are more susceptible to injury, particularly chest injuries. To reduce the risk, implement the guidelines below:

### IN ORDER TO PREVENT SIMILAR INCIDENTS IN THE FUTURE

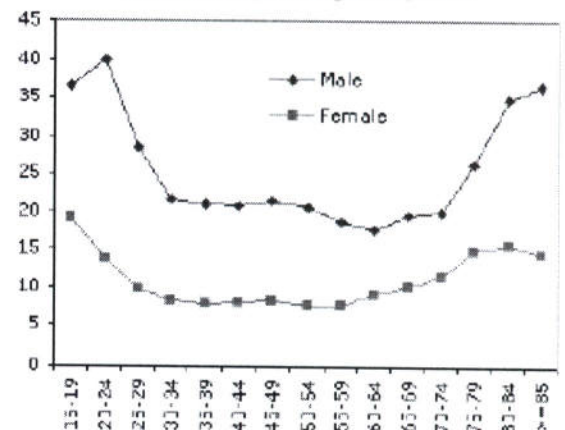
#### Employers should:

- **Assign** a key member of the management team responsibility and authority to set and enforce comprehensive driver safety policy.
- **Teach** drivers how to recognize and manage fatigue and in-vehicle distractions.
- **Restrict** driving based on assessment of actual driving ability – not solely on general health status or an arbitrary age limit.

#### Employees should:

- **Wear** a seat belt.
- **Leave** plenty of time to reach destination.
- **Ensure** they are well rested. **Take** regular rest breaks.
- **Do Not** use a cell phone when driving.
- **Plan** the route, especially if traveling in an unfamiliar area.
- **Use Caution** at intersections and interchanges, especially when making left hand turns.
- **Participate** in "refresher" driver training.

Motor vehicle crash deaths per 100,000 people by age and gender, 2004



### DID YOU KNOW?

- Roadway crashes are the leading cause of occupational fatalities for older workers in the U.S.
- Older drivers are more likely than other drivers to have a crash at an intersection (particularly when turning left) and when merging or changing lanes on a freeway
- Drivers ages 65 and older have higher crash death rates per mile driven than all but teen drivers and are more likely to die
- 16% of drivers ages 60-69 who were involved in fatal crashes had a blood alcohol level at or above 0.08%
- About 10% of individuals have medical conditions that may lead to unsafe driving behaviors

**MIFACE:** [www.oem.msu.edu](http://www.oem.msu.edu)

**NIOSH:** [www.cdc.gov/niosh/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/). Older Drivers in the Workplace. Publication 2005-159

**National Center for Injury Prevention & Control**  
[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/older.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/older.htm)

**Insurance Institute for Highway Safety:**  
[www.highwaysafety.org](http://www.highwaysafety.org)

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:** [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)

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