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APRIL 13, 2018

ISSUE 218

PUT SPRING IN YOUR STEP, BUT SLOW DOWN YOUR CAR

KEITH T. KERMAN

Spring has finally arrived and more New Yorkers and tourists will be out and about. This week, City DOT and NYPD warned of the increased risks of collisions, injuries and fatalities on the roads in the spring, especially on weekends. Traffic fatality risks in April increase 28% over the winter months.

City fleet operations also step up in the warm weather months, as do increased safety risks. A look at the non-emergency fatalities impacting the City's fleet since 2014 shows that 60% of the events took place from April through July and all of them between February and September.

The most important thing fleet operators can do is to drive slowly at all times. In FY17, we did record a 13% decrease in speed events across the 39 million miles tracked through our current telematics initiative. That said, there is much more to do. City fleet vehicles are just as responsible to slow down at school areas, work zones, and throughout the City as all private vehicles. This spring we need to refocus efforts to ensure safe and cautious fleet operations.

Along with slow driving, City operators are reminded to stay focused and avoid driving distractions. City fleet has barred use of cell phones, hand held or hands free, smoking or texting while driving. NYC is too busy and hectic a place to do anything but stay focused on the road at all times when behind the wheel.

This spring, fleet will also be rolling out new bumper stickers to promote safe driving and encourage the public to let us know when we fall short.

Enjoy the improved weather and stay safe.



FLEET SPOTLIGHT: FORKLIFT SAFETY

KEITH KERMAN AND LENIN FIERRO

In the last month, NYC has experienced two fatalities involving forklift operations and employees of private sector companies. In Brooklyn, a 47-year-old construction worker lost his life in a work site incident, as did another 34-year-old construction worker in Queens.

While these tragic incidents did not involve City operations, they are a reminder to us of the risks inherent in all fleet operations and forklift operation specifically. NYC operates 541 forklifts across 11 agencies with DSNY, DEP, DOT and NYPD using the most.

At our Fleet Federation meeting on April 13, we reviewed safety requirements for forklifts. We also received a demonstration of Virtual Reality technology that holds promise of adding to our tool of training options for forklifts. All forklift operators must have an up to date OSHA training certification and also be re-assessed at least every three years. DCAS offers a requirements contract with Continental Lift Truck for a one day safety and training course for forklift operations which meets the OSHA requirements.

Among the most serious dangers with forklifts:

- Tip-over events especially when forklifts are improperly loaded, on uneven surfaces, or brakes are not properly applied;
- Collisions of forklifts with staff working in confined spaces.

Please take this opportunity to review safety requirements with all operators. Please reach out to NYCFleet@dcas.nyc.gov if you need assistance coordinating the safety training. Thanks.

