

Wilmington Site News

Safety & Security

New Personal Electronic Device Policy (C-25)

Effective June 28, 2010, the use of personal electronic devices such as mobile phones, Bluetooth devices and iPods/MP3 players in production areas (e.g., shop areas, marked aisle ways, labs, warehouse, shipping, inspection and test facilities) will be prohibited. Use includes texting, and e-mailing, as well as voice calls (Wilmington Safety Health and Fire Protection policy C-25, Personal Electronic Devices).

Employees can use their personal electronic devices in break areas, office areas, or outside, preferably during breaks or lunch. Exceptions may be granted by supervision for limited specific purposes such as equipment troubleshooting or technical support requiring equipment operation. Emergencies and other special circumstances will be taken into consideration on an as-needed basis.

This policy applies to personal electronic devices, not company-issued phones. However, all employees are required to use their phones safely and in accordance with policy. Phone use (personal or business-issued) is prohibited while operating (i.e., moving) powered industrial vehicles (including golf and maintenance carts). Use in personal vehicles is discouraged and all local laws regarding use of personal electronic devices while driving should be followed. Driving while texting is now illegal in North Carolina.

Source: EHS

Questions and Answers

Why is the personal electronic device policy changing?

To minimize distractions and potential injuries and process or quality issues due to use of personal electronic devices such as mobile phones, Bluetooth devices and iPods/MP3 players.

What has changed from the prior version?

Specific restriction has been added on use of personal electronic devices in production areas, labs, and test facilities. "Use" includes texting, and e-mailing, as well as voice calls. Note that policy references use, not possession, of personal electronic devices in production areas. Personal electronic devices carried into radiation controlled areas is discouraged, and all personal possessions must be surveyed out in accordance with radiation protection requirements.

Where and when can I use my mobile phone or iPod/MP3 player?

Break areas, office areas, or outside, preferably during break or lunch. Exceptions may be granted by supervision for limited specific purposes such as equipment troubleshooting or technical support requiring equipment presence/operation.

What if I need to be reached on my phone in an emergency?

Special circumstances will be taken into consideration. A suggestion (if feasible) would be to take the call, instruct the caller you will call back, and then leave the area and return the call. If possible, give your supervisor a “heads up” on potential needs.

I often use my personal phone for business purposes. Is this no longer allowed?

It is preferred that personal phones are not used for business purposes. Notify supervision if there is a recurring need for improved communication to evaluate need for company-provided mobile phone, radio, or land-line phone.

I like to have my iPod/MP3 player when I’m working alone or on a tedious task. Can I still do that?

No. *This could be unsafe in the event of emergency or if evacuation is required. There have been issues where employees have tried to alert another employee who was using a portable electronic device and the employee was unable to hear the alert.*

What about Bluetooth earpieces? Can I wear it even though I’m not on a call?

No. *Talking in hands-free mode still poses a possible distraction to the employee. In addition, it is problematic for supervisors to determine if an employee is complying with the policy when a Bluetooth is used, even if a call is not underway.*

What will happen if I am caught using my mobile phone on the shop floor?

Circumstances will be considered on an individual basis, but progressive discipline policy will be implemented, as appropriate, for a Category II offense.

What about supervisors and managers? They’re on their phones all the time!

This policy applies to personal electronic devices, not company-issued phones. However, all employees are required to use their phones safely and in accordance with policy.

What about use of using mobile phones in vehicles?

Phone use (personal or business-issued) is prohibited while operating (i.e., moving) powered industrial vehicles (including golf and maintenance carts). Use in personal vehicles is discouraged and all local laws regarding use of personal electronic devices while driving should be followed. Driving while texting is now illegal in North Carolina, and many other states.