



## Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



### Motor Vehicle Safety (Loose Cargo) Safety Message

Our roads can be a dangerous place. According to the National Safety Council, an estimated 42,000 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2020. Motor vehicle crashes are also the leading cause of workplace injuries according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 2016, motor vehicle incidents contributed to 40% of all workplace fatalities.

The majority of injuries occur during the initial impact of a crash, however, loose cargo both inside or outside the vehicle, such as the bed of a truck, can cause additional injuries or property loss incidents.

### Loose Cargo in Vehicles

Loose cargo within a vehicle or piece of heavy equipment such as empty bottles, trash, tools, PPE, etc. are not only a distraction while driving or operating, but they also turn into projectiles during a crash. A recent segment on Good Morning America looked at the dangers unsecured items in a vehicle can pose. Safety expert, Sean Kane of Safety Research and Strategies, told Good Morning America that ordinary objects in cars and trucks are responsible for 13,000 injuries each year.

Those half-filled water bottles, canned goods, lab tops could all become dangerous projectiles when hurling through the air during collisions. At 55 miles per hour, a 20-pound object hits with 1,000 pounds of force — so powerful that a suitcase can literally shear off the arm of a crash test dummy. It is just as important to mitigate the secondary hazards, such as loose cargo, as it is to do so for the more obvious hazards that can lead to a crash.

### Discussion points:

- What items currently pose a hazard in your vehicle or piece of equipment?
- What can we do to make our vehicles safer when dealing with loose cargo?