

ARTICLE

August, 2021

Technology Helping Avoid Truck Accidents



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Last year, the United States experienced the largest reduction in trucking accidents since the government began tracking the data in 1975. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the number of fatal accidents involving large trucks fell over 20 percent from 2008 to 2009.

Despite the recent drop in fatalities nationwide, over 3,200 people died last year in these accidents. In New Jersey, the rate of fatal trucking accidents actually increased, from 48 in 2008 to 65 last year.

Lane Departure Warning Systems

In a recent report, the NHTSA outlined the main causes of trucking accidents. Speeding was the number one factor, while failure to keep the proper lane was the second leading cause. Other reasons for accidents included fatigue, inattentiveness, improper lane changes and failing to yield to other drivers.

As lane departures are one of the leading reasons for truck accidents, the industry is making prevention one of its top priorities. The University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute and Takata Corporation conducted a yearlong study to test the effectiveness of warning systems that will help avoid trucks drifting into other lanes of traffic.

The Safe Trak system, manufactured by Takata, was the device used exclusively in the study, though there are other similar warning systems in the market. These systems help drivers maintain a more centered position in the lane and make them more aware of the traffic conditions directly around their vehicle. A warning signal alerts the driver of any sudden shift in lane position or drifting.

According to statistics reported in the Commercial Carrier Journal, the study found that 38 percent of drivers noted that the lane departure warning system prevented them from being involved in an accident; and 83 percent of drivers would prefer a truck with the system installed and would encourage their carrier to purchase them.

Working With an Attorney

Due to the disparity in size and weight, accidents involving trucks and passenger vehicles often involve serious injuries. If you have been involved in a trucking accident or any other personal injury accident, it is important to [contact an experienced attorney](#) as soon as possible.