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CHECK OUT OUR NEW VIDEOS!

Check out our website for our latest videos. We would really appreciate it if you could share your comments, too! You can find the videos at www.shannonlawgroup.com



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REFERRALS WELCOME

We thank you so much for referring clients to us over the years. We are grateful that you have trusted us with taking care of those who need our services. For any referrals, please contact us at (312) 578-9501 or fill out our online contact form at ShannonLawGroup.com.



IT ONLY TAKES A SECOND = The Dangers of Distracted Driving

Most of you know I love to travel our great country on the highways when I can. Over the last 10 years, it seems like the number of trucks on the interstate highways has increased dramatically. With that, there are a lot more distracted drivers.

In 2015 alone, distracted driving claimed the lives of 3,477 people — and injured 391,000 more. Distracted truck drivers, who can spend up to 14 hours a day on the highway, caused some of these crashes. In fact, a 2009 study found that 71 percent of large truck crashes occurred when the truck driver was multitasking.

A distraction is defined as anything that can take a driver's eyes off the road. Even if drivers are distracted for five seconds while traveling at 55 mph, they cover the distance of a football field in that time. In those five seconds, a lot can go wrong, including a crash that takes a life or severely injures someone else.

A truck driver can become distracted for multiple reasons. However, there are two major distractions that can take most of their attention while on the road:

1. Texting or calling on a hand-held device

Texting while driving is illegal for commercial vehicle drivers — but that does not deter them from doing it. As a society, we've grown more accustomed to sending a quick text rather than calling someone. Unlike telephone calls, texting requires you to take your eyes off the road while driving.

As such, texting puts truck drivers at a higher risk for being in a crash. In a 2009 real-world study, researchers found that texting while driving increased a driver's chance of being involved in a safety-critical event by 23 times.

Sometimes, calling on a telephone or communicating on a dispatching device can be just as distracting as texting.



These devices allow truck drivers to communicate with their dispatchers, navigate the area, and keep track of their logbooks.

In 2009, a study revealed that using a dispatching device while driving increased a driver's chances of being involved in a safety-critical event by nine times. Likewise, a 2010 study found that dialing a hand-held cell phone while driving increased the risk of a crash or near-crash by three times.

2. Handling materials (e.g., food, maps) inside the cabin

A truck driver can also be distracted while handling materials inside the cabin, such as food, drinks, and maps. Sometimes, if a driver is in a rush, they will order a meal and eat it while they're driving. This is extremely dangerous; a 2006 study showed that eating while driving was riskier than talking on a cell phone. Looking at a map also increases the chance of being in a safety-critical event by seven times.

When traveling, the best policy is defensive driving. You never know what the other driver will do, but you can create space for yourself if the other driver makes a mistake. Let's be careful out there. Enjoy the rest of summer. The school year is already here.

-Joe Shannon

Motorcycles offer riders the freedom of the open road and the wind at your back, but that freedom comes with an increased risk of suffering a serious accident. Motorcycles often lack many of the safety protections other vehicles have, such as airbags and seatbelts. Moreover, motorcycles weigh considerably less than your average passenger car. Their lightweight nature combined with a lack of standard safety protections means that when a motorcycle collides with another vehicle, the results can be severe. To illustrate just how much of an increased risk comes from riding on two wheels, here are few relevant statistics from the Illinois Department of Transportation.

- While motorcycle accidents accounted for only 1.1 percent of all crashes in 2016 (the last year available on record), they accounted for 14.3 percent of all crash-related fatalities.
- In the same year, there were 3,504 motorcycle crashes in Illinois; 2,466 of these involved injuries to riders — a whopping 70 percent of the total.
- In 2016, about 50 percent of all motorcycle crashes (1,202) involved were single-vehicle accidents.
- The number of motorcycle injuries and fatalities both increased from 2015 at rates of 1.9 and 4.3 percent, respectively.



With these statistics in mind, it's important to practice safe riding at all times if you are a motorcyclist. An eye for safety begins before you even hit the road. Wearing appropriate gear will provide you with increased protection and visibility. Illinois is one of only two states without a motorcycle helmet law on the books, but you should always wear your helmet regardless.

Motorcycles are much more sensitive to inclement conditions than other passenger vehicles, so you should check the weather before you head out. The same goes for road conditions. An SUV may be able to make it through a pothole with little more than a bump, but that isn't always true of motorcycles.

When you're traveling, it's important to ride defensively. Leave plenty of room between yourself and other vehicles to give yourself time to react. Never assume you know how another driver will behave. After all, a little extra caution is much better than regret.

Follow these safety tips every time you hop on a motorcycle. Enjoy the ride, but remember the dangers you may encounter while traveling on two wheels.

ELD MANDATE HOLDS ALL TRUCKING CARRIERS ACCOUNTABLE

On Dec. 18, 2017, the Electronic Logging Device (ELD) rule went into effect. Congressionally mandated as a part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), the rule requires all commercial motor vehicles to be equipped with electronic logging devices that track how many hours drivers have been on the road.

Truck drivers have a maximum amount of hours they may drive over a consecutive period. These laws are part of the Hours of Service (HOS) regulations governed by the Federal Motor Carrier

Safety Administration (FMCSA). Commercial drivers may not be on the road for more than 14 hours after arriving on duty, following 10 consecutive hours off duty.

In the past, drivers recorded their hours of service in written logbooks. However, this method was flawed, as it allowed some truck drivers and carriers to falsify their hours.

When commercial drivers are on the road for more than 14 hours, they are more likely to become fatigued, increasing their chances of causing an accident. In a FMCSA study on causation in large truck crashes, researchers discovered that driver fatigue was the principal cause in 13 percent of all commercial vehicle accidents.

According to the FMCSA, the goal of the ELD rule is to create a safer work environment for drivers and others sharing the road with them. An ELD synchronizes with a vehicle's engine to automatically record driving time for easier, more accurate hours of service recording. This prevents drivers from being overworked as well.

This ruling is a great result for the driving public. Some of our clients have been the victims of crashes caused by fatigued drivers who fixed their logbooks. There is no place for that type of conduct. This technology should help weed out bad drivers and promote more safe driving habits on our country's roadways.



FAQ: DO I NEED A LAWYER FOR MY CASE?

When a potential client contacts us, they often ask, "Do I have a case?" when they're really asking, "Do I need a lawyer for my case?" Most of the time, they have never been in a situation where they need legal counsel, so they want to make sure their claim would fare better with legal representation.

If you ever find yourself in a similar situation, here are three questions to ask yourself:

1. Can I handle this myself, or do I need a lawyer to level the playing field? If you broke a bone or suffered a concussion in an accident or were transported to the hospital after a crash, you most likely want to consult with a lawyer regarding the incident. You'll want to avoid resolving the case unless you are finished getting treated by your doctors.

If you're in a low-speed impact crash and no one was injured, you may be reimbursed by an insurance company for any damages to your vehicle. In these situations, you can settle your claim without needing representation from an attorney. However, you can always give us a call, and we will try to point you in the right direction.

On the other hand, if your home burns to the ground and a home insurance adjuster asks for your testimony under oath when you are in shock from seeing everything you own go up in smoke, consult with a lawyer right away to level the playing field.

2. Were my injuries caused by the negligence of another person or entity? The law defines negligence as the failure to behave with

the level of care that someone of ordinary prudence would have exercised under the same circumstances. For example, if a truck driver was texting when they hit your car, any injuries you suffered from the crash were caused by the negligence of the truck driver.

If you have serious injuries as a result of an accident, there is a lot of data out there to secure proof of negligence. Investigators for the insurance company will be all over it, so it's important to have a team of dedicated attorneys by your side to find this evidence first in order to prove that the other party's negligent actions caused your injuries.

3. Do I have any recoverable damages? As stated above, if you were not injured in the crash and went to work the next day without any medical treatment, you most likely do not need a lawyer to assist you. The damages recoverable in Illinois negligence cases are separated into two categories: economic and noneconomic.

Economic damages, such as medical bills and lost wages, are concrete and measurable. Noneconomic damages, like pain and suffering or diminished quality of life, are more difficult to estimate. If you are seriously injured, you have such damages. If you choose not to hire a lawyer following a serious injury, you may never recover these damages.

As always, you can contact us at (312) 578-9501 or on our website at ShannonLawGroup.com if you would like to speak with an experienced personal injury lawyer today.

PARMESAN ROASTED CAULIFLOWER

Cauliflower doesn't have to be boring! With a little Parmesan cheese and some seasoning, it can pack a punch of flavor that will please even your most vegetable-averse family members.

Ingredients

- 1 head cauliflower
- 1 medium yellow onion, sliced
- 4 sprigs thyme
- 4 garlic cloves, unpeeled
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese, ideally Parmigiano-Reggiano
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

1. Heat oven to 425 F.
2. Cut cauliflower into florets. On a large baking sheet, toss cauliflower with onions, thyme, garlic, and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Roast for 35-40 minutes, tossing occasionally.
4. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and finish roasting, about 10 minutes longer.
5. Serve while hot.

Inspired by epicurious.com.

AUGUST 2018 DATES OF CONSEQUENCE

- Aug. 12** Woodridge Rotary Mini Triathlon
- Aug. 14** First Day of Class at St. Francis High School
- Aug. 15** Feast of the Assumption of Mary
- Aug. 24** Feast of St. Bartholomew

