

Photographing the Scene of an Accident

RISK ENGINEERING – YOUR BUSINESS INSURANCE SPECIALISTS

A camera is a necessary tool

Cameras can help protect you against potential fraud, limit your liability, assist in claims cases and help drivers become more aware of safety issues. Here are some do's and don'ts concerning taking photos at the scene of vehicle accidents.



Do

- Take pictures
- Call the police
- Tend to the injured parties
- Keep the accident from getting worse, set out flares, markers, etc.
- Contact your company representative

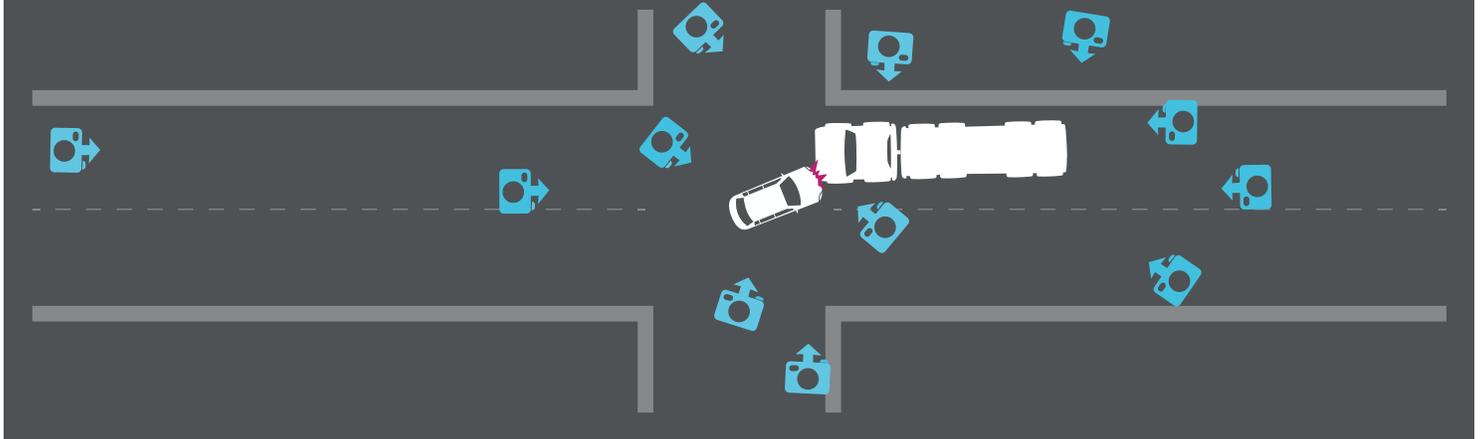
Take photos **before** vehicles are moved, if possible. Be careful when taking pictures to position yourself where you won't get hit. Plan to "tell a story" with your pictures. Take a shot of the overall scene from a distance, gradually moving forward to the point of collision, taking photos along the way. Photograph road conditions such as potholes, obstructions and debris and road sign obstructions.

Don't

- Admit fault
- Take photos of injured people or fatalities
- Take photos of any graphic scenes
- Provide the disposable camera to any other party at the scene, unless specifically a representative of your company or insurance provider
- Interfere with the police officer's investigation; don't get in the way

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Camera position examples



More photo-taking suggestions

- Take a photo of interior of vehicles (if possible, odometer, radar detectors, headsets, cans/bottles, cell phones, etc.)
 - Take two photos of the auto or other object you collided with. If the accident involves a vehicle, take photos from opposite corners so you can see all four sides. All other objects should show the damage from two angles. Stand 10 feet from the auto/vehicle or object to get a better view/image.
 - Take four photos of your vehicle that collided with the other object. Make these from the opposite corners. These should show all sides of the vehicle and include trailer damage as applicable.
 - Take photos of the other vehicle occupants, if any, involved in the accident if they do not appear injured.
 - Take photos of the license tags, ID numbers, and unique markings of autos/vehicles belonging to persons who claim to be witnesses but won't identify themselves. A photo of the witness's license plate may prove helpful, should the witness(es) leave the scene unexpectedly.
- Take photos of any skid marks or gouge marks left on the pavement or dirt areas. Step off the length of these marks and photograph them from both directions.
 - Take all remaining shots of items you feel will help show how or why this accident happened. Be sure to take a picture of traffic controls and signs, if any are present or should have been present.
 - Take all the photos your camera has available or ask someone at the scene to take them for you.
 - Use a flash, even in daylight. Remember, a flash is only effective to about 10 feet.
 - Hold the camera as still as possible when taking photos.

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