Who’s Looking Out for the Lone Worker?
Strategies to Protect Today’s Lone Frontline Employees

Safety leaders have an important mission to do all they can to reduce workplace risks, avoid myriad hazards, and protect their people. But what happens when the “workplace” is decentralized, and hazards are no longer predictable?

Today’s workplace is especially dynamic for those who work outside of a physical headquarters and serve in communities. This group is sometimes referred to as the connected workforce or mobile workforce: mobile workers are not bound to a central physical location and remain connected through mobile technology like laptops, tablets, and smartphones.

Frontline mobile workers include those in construction, utilities, and other field services who perform customer-facing or operational activities across locations. And that employee group is growing. By 2024, the U.S. mobile worker population is expected to reach 93.5 million. When this population works alone, independently tending to a job site, they are considered “lone workers” and are often vulnerable.
Real Stories From the Front Line

Put yourself in the shoes of today’s lone mobile worker. They have no way of knowing what’s behind the next door they knock on or beyond the next mile they travel. These are true stories:

Just a normal day tree pruning turns dangerous when an arborist, miles from their vehicle, encounters an antagonistic person illegally hunting in the area.

An exterminator arrives at their destination, but instead of termites, they discover an illegal drug operation.

A commercial properties manager checks up on a vacant building to find hostile squatters inside.

Inside a chicken coop alone, a worker lays on their back, unable to move. They have slipped and become seriously injured. No one knows where they are, and they are stranded the entire night.

Calling For Higher Standards for Lone Workers

The following excerpt comes from the Occupational Safety and Health Standard Number 1915.84 – Working alone, pertinent to Shipyard Employment:

Whenever an employee is working alone, such as in a confined space or isolated location, the employer shall account for each employee: Throughout each work shift at regular intervals appropriate to the job assignment to ensure the employee’s safety and health; and at the end of the job assignment or at the end of the work shift, whichever occurs first. The employer shall account for each employee by sight or verbal communication.³

Almost 1 in 5 lone worker professionals report having an accident and struggling to get help.⁴

Best-in-class safety cultures move beyond minimum compliance to a true culture of care.
Be the Leader That Has Their Back

Not all risky scenarios can be prevented or controlled. How can safety leaders ensure that lone workers are never truly alone?

Companies have turned to wearables that address specific safety concerns and connected worker platforms. One industry-agnostic, convenient solution is to use existing mobile devices.

97% of employees carry at least 1 mobile device with them while working. Whether personal smartphones or corporate issued devices, mobile technology is key to performing job tasks, such as measuring dimensions with AI, completing in-app job checklists, or capturing photos to send to dispatch in real time.

These same mobile devices connect workers to safety – helping employers know where their workers are and if they are safe, and triaging important messages to get immediate assistance.

97% of employees carry at least 1 mobile device with them while working.
A Connected Worker Platform

TRUCE offers mobile technology-based solutions that help workers get the help they need when they most need it. Teams address work-critical topics and solve urgent problems in a streamlined safety hub that protects workers throughout the entire work day.

Handle Critical Events Seamlessly in App

Targeted Event Escalation and Response

Respond to, escalate, and document time sensitive operational and safety related situations that occur in the field. TRUCE helps workers get their important message in front of the right people and the immediate assistance that they need.

Example use case: A crew member arrives at an unsafe location and escalates the situation to a supervisor.

Message Specific Employee Groups Easily

Enterprise Messaging and Communication

Contact exact employees and teams based on geographic location, imminent threats, work group, and more. Improve safety, communication, and collaboration with a flexible and targeted messaging platform across distributed work teams.

Example use case: Severe weather is about to hit, and you need a crew working in a specific area to stop and take shelter.

View Frontline Worker Locations at a Glance

Connected Workforce Visibility

At a glance, view where team members are working along with their status. See that team members arrived safely. Know when someone has been on location too long and might be in danger. Employees know that someone cares where they are, is looking out for them, and has their back in case they need assistance or backup.

Example use case: A worker is completing a job miles from their vehicle and has not moved for hours or completed a final check in for the night.
A worker’s day can change with every turn. It’s time that their mobile devices are as dynamic as the situations they face. To learn more, go to trucesoftware.com.

About TRUCE

At TRUCE®, we believe there’s a better way to leverage all a mobile device has to offer in the workplace, while still protecting what’s most important – your employees, your assets and your IP. TRUCE offers the first Contextual Mobility Management solution, providing flexible, situational enforcement of your safety and mobile device policies, allowing companies to augment, enable or suspend mobile apps based on the work being performed, the work location, or even the user or work group. Our patented technology adds a layer of contextual intelligence to traditional mobile device management approaches and operates on both iOS and Android platforms.

Sources

1. Employer Responsibilities | Occupational Safety and Health Administration
   https://www.osha.gov/workers/employer-responsibilities
2. What is a Mobile Workforce? | IBM
   https://www.ibm.com/topics/mobile-workforce
3. Almost 1/5 of Lone Workers Struggled to Get Help After Accident
4. Mobile Workers Will Be 60% of the Total U.S. Workforce by 2024, According to IDC
5. OSHA Standard Number 1915.84 - Working alone
   https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1915/1915.84
6. Workplace wearables and Connected Worker solutions: Changing the digital landscape of occupational safety, health and productivity
7. Distracted Driving with a Connected Workforce