

Motive

A yellow wheel loader is shown in a construction or mining setting, positioned in front of a large, dark pile of material. The loader's bucket is filled with the same material. The scene is captured from a low angle, with a person's hand holding a pen in the foreground, slightly out of focus. The background shows industrial structures and a bright sky.

The State of Construction Fleet Safety

How are construction fleets thinking about safety? We surveyed 400 construction fleets to find out.



The State of Construction Fleet Safety: An accident waiting to happen

In early 2023, we surveyed more than 1,100 fleets in industries like trucking and logistics, construction, oil and gas, agriculture, and delivery to understand their priorities and practices, specifically around driver and fleet safety. We found that many fleets have an outdated approach to safety; respondents claim that fleet safety is a priority but think of it as a cost center. [You can download the full 2023 State of Safety report here.](#)

While the report is a multi-industry study, we wanted to look closer at the construction industry and how construction fleets are addressing safety. Of the 1,100 fleets surveyed, nearly 400 are in construction. We analyzed just the construction responses and uncovered some interesting trends.

Key takeaways:

- Increasing revenue trumps improving safety for construction firms
- A small but significant portion of construction companies have done nothing to improve safety and mitigate risk
- Many construction fleets don't see the value in deploying dash cams
- Construction firms haven't made the connection between reducing safety incidents and increasing profitability

Let's dive a little deeper into how the construction industry as a whole thinks about safety and what — if anything — is being done to improve it.

Safety is important but money is more important

When asked what their top priorities are for 2023, construction fleets gave **increasing revenue** (41% of construction respondents) the top spot, with **improving safety** (18%) trailing far behind in second place. This shouldn't be surprising, as 2022 was a rough year for construction businesses. Costs skyrocketed, causing delays and cancellations. According to [Liberty Mutual](#), "continued supply chain disruption, a hardening market, the cost of inflation, and the aftermaths of a pandemic" proved incredibly challenging for construction companies, so it's only natural that, going into 2023, they were worried about increasing revenue.

Want more proof that money is on the minds of construction fleet managers? When asked to rank the biggest challenges their organization's fleet faced this past year, respondents from construction firms said **fuel costs** (#1), **vehicles being out of service** (#2), **increased insurance premiums** (tied #3), and a **driver shortage** (tied #3). **Safety incidents** landed in the #5 spot.

While most construction fleets are taking some action to improve safety—whether that's deploying off-the-shelf dash cams (31%) or implementing a driver coaching program (13%), **16% of construction fleets surveyed said they haven't taken any action to improve safety and mitigate risk**. That is shocking considering the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports](#) that "transportation incidents are the second highest cause of death for construction laborers, accounting for 75 fatalities in 2020. This is an increase from 73 in 2019 and is the highest number in a year from 2016 to 2020."

Construction is lagging behind other industries in safety

While 31% of construction-fleet respondents have deployed off-the-shelf dash cams and 13% have deployed dash cams powered by artificial intelligence (AI), many are still on the fence regarding the installation of camera systems. When asked why they haven't deployed dash cams in their vehicles, "**we don't see the value**" (24%) and "**we don't have the budget**" (37%) were the top two responses.

It's the same story with implementing a coaching program. When asked why they haven't implemented a driver safety program, construction fleets' #1 response was "**We don't feel we would benefit from a coaching program**" (39%). On average, only 20% of other industries surveyed responded the same way.

And when asked how they rate their organization's 2022 investment in driver safety initiatives and technology, 11% of construction-fleet respondents said they were **drastically underinvested**, more than any other industry surveyed.

But it's not all bad news for construction fleet safety

Even though there are some stark safety gaps in the construction industry, there's a foundation that can be built upon. Progress will require construction firms to see the direct, financial benefits of improving safety.

As previously mentioned, the construction industry is focused on increasing revenue and decreasing costs. But improving safety can have a significantly positive impact on a company's bottom line. Forward-thinking fleets that have implemented an AI-powered safety solution to prevent crashes saved anywhere between \$91,000 and \$1.72M in 2022*. And, according to our 2023 State of Safety report, more than half (52%) of large fleets surveyed say they have saved over \$10,000 by implementing a safety program, while 20% of firms have saved over \$100,000.

Insurance premiums were also mentioned as a big challenge, and safety can help lower those costs. 44% of organizations with driver safety programs, across all industries, report seeing insurance savings as a result:

- Organizations with small fleets (<20 vehicles) saved a median of 5-8%.
- Mid-sized fleets (20-99 vehicles) reported saving a median of 9-12%.
- Large fleets (100+ vehicles) also reported saving a median of 9-12%.

How can construction build a safety culture?

Construction firms have a big opportunity right now to leverage safety investments to help reach their aggressive revenue targets and beat out competitors who are slow to catch on. But to do so, they need to shift their mindset; they need to stop seeing safety as a cost center and start treating it as a profit center. That will be the tipping point where we'll see more construction companies investing in safety — when they understand that there's a clear financial upside. Until that disconnect is reconciled, fleets will focus on safety when it's convenient or, even worse, after a potentially disastrous accident or incident.

For more information on how Motive can help you improve driver and fleet safety while increasing productivity and profitability, visit <https://gomotive.com/products/driver-safety/>.

*Calculated using number of crashes survey respondents reported in [The 2023 State of Safety](#) and the FMCSA data on the average cost of large commercial vehicle crashes.

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About Motive

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