The Dangers of Texting While Driving

The popularity of mobile devices has had some unintended and even dangerous consequences. We now know that mobile communications are linked to a significant increase in distracted driving, resulting in injury and loss of life.

- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that in 2012 driver distraction was the cause of 18 percent of all fatal crashes – with 3,328 people killed – and crashes resulting in an injury – with 421,000 people wounded.

- Forty percent of all American teens say they have been in a car when the driver used a cell phone in a way that put people in danger, according to a Pew survey.

- The Virginia Tech Transportation Institute found that text messaging creates a crash risk 23 times worse than driving while not distracted.

- Eleven percent of drivers aged 18 to 20 who were involved in an automobile accident and survived admitted they were sending or receiving texts when they crashed.

Distracted driving endangers life and property and the current levels of injury and loss are unacceptable.

To stem this problem, the FCC is working with industry, safety organizations, and other government agencies, to inform and educate the public about the dangers of distracted driving and is seeking to identify and facilitate the development of innovative technologies that could reduce the incidence of distracted driving. To help in this effort and share information, we created a dedicated website, www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/distracted-driving.

Distracted Driving Information Clearinghouse

In addition, to collect and share information about consumer outreach activities and technology that could potentially reduce the problem of distracted driving, the Commission’s staff created the FCC Distracted Driving Information Clearinghouse at www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/distracted-driving-information-clearinghouse.

State Laws

Currently there is no national ban on texting or using a wireless phone while driving, but a number of states have passed laws banning texting or wireless phones or requiring hands-free use of wireless phones while driving. For more information on state laws, visit www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/laws/cellphone_laws.html.
What You Can Do

**Give Clear Instructions** – Give teen drivers simple, clear instructions not to use their wireless devices while driving. According to Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association, the easiest way to say it is: “On the road, off the phone.” Before new drivers get their licenses, discuss the fact that taking their eyes off the road – even for a few seconds – could cost someone injury or even death.

**Lead by Example** – Children learn from their parent’s behavior. No one should text and drive. Be an example for your children and if you need to text or talk on the phone, pull over to a safe place.

**Become Informed and Be Active** – Review the information in our Clearinghouse and the literature on the websites mentioned above. Set rules for yourself and your household regarding distracted driving. Tell family, friends and organizations to which you belong about the importance of driving without distractions. Take information to your children’s’ schools and ask that it be shared with students and parents.

**For More Information**

For more information about wireless devices and driving, visit the FCC’s Distracted Driving website at [www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/distracted-driving](http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/distracted-driving).

**Consumer Help Center**

For more information on other consumer issues, visit the FCC’s Consumer Help Center at [https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov](https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov).

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