

Greensboro Police Department



DISTRACTED DRIVING RESOURCE SHEET

WHAT IS DISTRACTED DRIVING?

- Distracted driving is defined as any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving.
- All distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety.
- Types of distractions include:
 - Texting
 - Using a cell phone or smartphone
 - Eating and drinking
 - Talking to passengers
 - Grooming
 - Reading, including maps
 - Using a navigation system (GPS device)
 - Watching a video
 - Adjusting a radio, CD player, or MP3 player
- Texting requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver; considered the most alarming distraction.

NC STATE LEGISLATION

As of December 1, 2009, North Carolina General Statute 20-137.4A makes it unlawful to operate a vehicle on a public street, highway, or public vehicular area while using a mobile telephone to manually enter multiple letters or text in the device as a means of communicating with another person. It is also unlawful to read email or text messages while driving. The ban does not apply if the vehicle is lawfully parked or stopped, or to law enforcement officers, fire department members, or ambulance drivers while they are performing official duties.

RESOURCES

The Police Chief Magazine, Distracted Driving, <http://www.policechiefmagazine.org>, © September 2013, IACP

UNC School of Government Blog, Distracted Drivers, by Shea Denning, August 17, 2009, <http://nccriminallaw.sog.unc.edu>

CTIA-The Wireless Association. International non-profit trade association that has represented the wireless communications industry since 1984. <http://www.ctia.org>

NOPUS-National Occupant Protection Use Survey. Provides Nationwide probability-based observed data

on the driver electronic device use in the United States. NOPUS is conducted annually by the National Center for Statistics and Analysis of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <http://www.nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov>

UMTRI-University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute. Advancing safe and sustainable transportation in a Toyota Teen Driver Distraction Study. <http://www.umtri.umich.edu>

VTI-Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. Unique, state-of-the-art, full-scale, closed test-bed research facility dedicated to save lives, save time, save money and protect the environment. <http://www.vtti.vt.edu>

NHTSA-National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Established by the Highway Safety Act of 1970 and is dedicated to achieving the highest standards of excellence in motor vehicle and highway safety. It works daily to help prevent crashes and their attendant costs, both human and financial. <http://www.nhtsa.gov>

NTSB-National Transportation Safety Board. An independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating and issuing safety recommendations for every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine and pipeline. <http://www.nts.gov>

OSHA-Occupational Safety and Health Administration. With the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, Congress created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to assure safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women by setting and enforcing standards and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance. <http://www.osha.gov>

FCC-Federal Communications Commission. Established by the Communications Act of 1934, the Federal Communications Commission operates as an independent United States government agency overseen by Congress. The FCC regulates interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and US Territories. <http://www.fcc.gov>

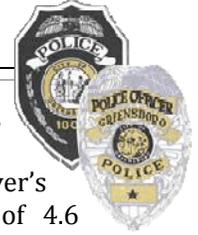
<http://www.gsopd.org>

Non-emergency number 336-373-2222

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FACTS AND STATISTICS

- In 2011, 3,331 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver, compared to 3,267 in 2010. (NHTSA)
- Text messaging, browsing and dialing resulted in the longest duration of drivers taking their eyes off the road. (VTTI)
- 387,000 people were injured in motor vehicle crashes in 2011 involving a distracted driver, compared to 416,000 injured in 2010. (NHTSA)
- Text messaging increased the risk of a crash or near-crash by two times and resulted in drivers taking their eyes off the road for an average of 23 seconds total. (VTTI)
- Texting while driving remains commonplace among teens, despite ongoing, nationwide efforts to educate drivers on the significant risks associated with these behaviors. (UMTRI)
- 10% of injury crashes in 2011 were reported as distraction-affected crashes. (NHTSA)
- As of December 2012, there were 171.3 billion text messages sent in the United States and its territories every month. (CTIA)
- 11% of all drivers under the age of 20 involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the crash. This age group has the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted. (NHTSA)
- Visual-manual tasks (locating the phone, looking at the phone and touching the phone) are always involved when using a hand-held cell phone. This makes the overall use of a hand-held cell phone riskier when driving. (VTTI)
- For drivers 15-19 years old involved in fatal crashes, 21% of the distracted drivers were distracted by the use of cell phones. (NHTSA)
- At any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010. (NOPUS)
- In 2011, 85% of the fatalities in distraction-affected crashes involved motor vehicle occupants or motorcyclists. (NHTSA)
- Engaging in visual-manual subtasks (such as reaching for a phone, dialing and texting) associated with the use of hand-held phones and other portable devices increased the risk of getting into a crash by three times. (VTTI)
- A quarter of teens respond to a text message once or more every time they drive. 20% of teens and 10% of parents admit that they have extended, multi-message text conversations while driving. (UMTRI)
- Sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds. This is the equivalent of driving 55mph the length of an entire football field—blind. (VTTI)
- Headset cell phone use is not substantially safer than hand-held use. (VTTI)
- Motor vehicle crashes remain the leading cause of death for US teens. In 2010, seven teens between the ages of 16-19 died every day on average from motor vehicle injuries, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (UMTRI)
- Even portable hands-free and vehicle-integrated hands-free cell phone use involved visual-manual tasks at least half of the time, which is associated with a greater crash risk. (VTTI)
- Talking or even listening on a phone while driving increases the risk of an accident by nearly 1.5 times. (VTTI)
- The percentage of drivers text-messaging or visibly manipulating hand-held devices increased significantly for a second year in a row from 0.9% in 2010 to 1.3% in 2011, while driver hand-held cell phone use stood at 5% in 2011. (NHTSA)
- 17% of injury crashes in 2011 were reported as distraction-affected crashes. (NHTSA)
- In 2011, 495 non-occupants were killed in distraction-affected crashes. (NHTSA)
- For distraction-affected crashes, the police accident report stated the driver used a cell phone to talk, listen, dial or text (or other cell phone activity) at the time of the crash. Cell phones were reported as a distraction for 12% of the distracted drivers in fatal crashes. (NHTSA)
- OSHA has taken a strong stance against distracted driving in the last few years, primarily because of the role that transportation plays in many work environments. In 2011, distracted driver was highlighted as an epidemic in the United States and called on employers to put an end to distractions on the road. (OSHA)
- FCC partnered with electronic device companies, safety committees, and bureaucratic agencies to supply public information concerning the hazards of texting and driving. These organizations are researching and striving to develop technologies to decrease texting while driving. To assist in this effort and provide public information, the FCC Distracted Driving Information Clearinghouse was developed. (FCC)

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