
Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. All distractions endanger driver, passenger and bystander safety. These 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
- Watching a video
- Adjusting a radio, CD player or MP3 player

Because text messaging requires visual, manual and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the most alarming distraction. Sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent—at 55 mph—of driving the length of an entire football field, BLIND.

Statistics

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), more than 3,400 people were killed and another 448,000 were injured in distraction-related crashes in 2023.

Distractions now join alcohol and speeding as leading factors in fatal and serious injury crashes.

Here are some startling distracted driving facts:

- Writing or reading a text message takes your eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of a football field – blindfolded.
- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety, If you text while you're behind the wheel, you're 20 time more likely to have a crash.
- Talking on a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity devoted to driving by 37 percent.
- Forty-five states and the District of Columbia ban text messaging for all drivers.
- Fourteen states and the District of Columbia prohibit handheld cell phone use by all drivers.

- Young people are especially at risk: In 2011, 12 percent 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.

Stay Focused – Avoid Distracted Driving!

- Minimize distractions – focus on the road ahead, not gadgets or the radio
- Get rest to avoid drowsiness, stay calm
- Anticipate other motorists and pedestrians actions
- Use mirrors to check around your vehicle
- Plan escape routes, be prepared for stopped vehicles

“...approximately 25% of police-reported crashes involve some form of driver inattention – the driver is distracted, asleep or fatigued, or otherwise “lost in thought”.” – NHTSA Study



Safety Brief

Distracted Driving

This form documents that the training specified above was presented to the listed participants. By signing below, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

Organization: _____ Date: _____

Trainer: _____ Trainer's Signature: _____

Class Participants:

Name: _____ Signature: _____

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Remember to document attendance in the Training Track application of the Risk Management Center.

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