

Distracted Driving



What is it? Anything that takes your eyes or mind off the road or your hands off the steering wheel.

There are three main types of distractions:

- Visual—taking your eyes off the road.
- Manual—taking your hands off the wheel.
- Cognitive—taking your mind off of driving.

Who's doing it? Most of us. Some people may not want to admit it. However, it's more common than you think. Distractions include turning to talk with a passenger, turning up the radio volume to your favorite song, or perhaps picking up your cell phone to make a call or read a text.

How risky is distracted driving? It is very risky and is known to lead to fatal car crashes. The California Office of Traffic Safety reports that 80 percent of vehicle crashes involve some sort of driver inattention. Up to 3,000 people nationwide are killed in crashes where driver distractions are involved.

Is texting and driving really that dangerous? The short answer is yes. Texting while driving is especially dangerous because it combines all three types of distractions. In addition, it takes the driver's attention away from driving more frequently and for longer periods than other distractions.

What Can You Do?

The most important thing you can do is obey the law.

Here is a review of California's law on driving with a cell phone and texting.

VC 23123 (a) A person shall not drive a motor vehicle while using a wireless telephone unless that telephone is specifically designed and configured to allow hands-free listening and talking, and is used in that manner while driving.

VC 23123.5.(a) A person shall not drive a motor vehicle while using an electronic wireless communications device to write, send, or read a text-based communication.

VC23124(a) This section applies to a person under the age of 18 years. (b) Notwithstanding Sections 23123 and 23123.5, a person described in subdivision (a) shall not drive a motor vehicle while using a wireless telephone or an electronic wireless communications device, even if equipped with a hands-free device.

California's handheld cell phone and texting laws are considered "primary" laws. A primary law means that an officer can pull you over for the offense without having to witness some other violation. The ban on hands-free devices for drivers

under 18 is a secondary violation. This means that an officer cannot pull you over just for this infraction, but an officer can cite you for a violation if he or she pulls you over for another reason. However, the prohibition on using a handheld cell phone while driving is still a primary violation. Officers can pull over drivers under age 18 just for this infraction.



Get the Facts on Distracted Driving



Here are some facts and figures about distracted driving from the California Office of Traffic Safety. Share them with all the drivers in your household. Have teen drivers? Make sure to sit down with them and go over these facts

- 80 percent of vehicle crashes involve some sort of driver distraction.
- Talking on a cell phone or texting is the number one source of driver distraction.
- Texting takes your eyes off the road for an average of five seconds, far

enough to travel the length of a football field at 55 mph. Most crashes happen with less than 2 seconds of reaction time.

- The act of talking on a cell phone, even hands free, can give you "inattention blindness," where your brain isn't seeing what's right in front of you. You aren't even aware that you are driving impaired. If you think you can handle both driving and talking on a cell phone or texting, you are kidding yourself and putting us all at risk.

Distracted driving endangers life and property. Keep your family safe by following the law by not texting and driving. If you have a teen driver make sure to take the time to sit down with him/her and go over some ground rules. Here are suggestions from the Federal Communications Commission:

- 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.

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Distracted Walking

We've all heard of distracted driving and how dangerous it can be. How about distracted walking? I'm sure you have seen it first hand. The pedestrian that has their head down walking and is staring at their cell phone unaware of their surroundings. You've probably even seen incidents on the news where someone has fallen into a fountain, walked into a pole, or slid down the steps while walking and using their cell phone. These may appear to be funny, but walking and using a cell phones can have serious consequences. Here are a couple of actual injury reports on pedestrians using their cell phone while walking.

- One 14-year-old boy walking down a road while talking on a cell phone fell 6 to 8 feet off a bridge into a rock-strewn ditch suffering chest and shoulder injuries.

- A 23-year old man was struck by a car while walking on the middle line of a road and talking on a cell phone, injuring his hip.

Other accidents associated with pedestrians using their cell phones include falling off walkways to walking in front of moving traffic.

Summer vacation will soon be upon us, and more teens and young people will be out and about. Make sure to go over some rules with your teen before they venture out. Here are some tips from AAA.

- **Wait until you get to your destination before calling people, texting or gaming.** If you have to text or make a call while walking, stop and find a safe location.
- **Avoid using hands-free devices while walking** – Hang up and walk!
- **Remove your headphones or turn down the volume of your**

music so you can hear what's going on around you.

- **Watch out for cars while crossing the street.** There are a lot of distracted drivers out there so keep looking all around you while in and around crosswalks.
- **Be a role model** – pay attention while you walk and if you see your friends and family distracted while they walk – speak up.



Avoid Home Improvement Scams



Now that spring is here, your thoughts may turn to some home projects. Need some help getting those projects completed? Make sure to hire a licensed contractor. Spring is the time when crooked contractors and home improvement scams start popping up.

There are many variations with this scam. Some may involve someone showing up offering to repair your roof, repave your driveway, or do whatever chore you need for a fair price. They ask for payment in advance, but then do either shoddy work or none at all.

Here are some red flags that may signal a home improvement scam:

- **He just happens to be in area.** Someone knocks on your door and says he can offer you a great deal because he's working nearby and has some leftover material.
- **The deal is good "today only."** The scam artist says you must act immediately to get this "special offer." Don't rush into a decision without doing your homework.
- **You have to pay upfront.** The worker demands you pay a substantial amount before work commences. This is a sign that you are about to be ripped off or that the worker is in financial trouble and has no credit to buy supplies.
- **He's hard to reach,** has no address, his vehicle is unmarked, and there's no information on him at the Better Business Bureau or anywhere.

Check out a contractor:

Contractors State License Board (CSLB) at www.cslb.ca.gov.

Better Business Bureau at www.bbb.org/sacramento



Sources: CA DMV, California Office of Traffic Safety, Federal Communications Commission, AAA

Police Department
1051 Junction Blvd.
Roseville CA 95678
(916) 774-5000
www.roseville.ca.us/police

Call 9-1-1
EMERGENCY
IN PROGRESS

Abandoned Vehicle Hotline
(916) 746-1022
Alarms/Alarm Permits
(916) 774-5093
Animal Control
(916) 774-5090

Community Events & Neighborhood Watch
(916) 774-5050
PDCommunityServices@roseville.ca.us

Graffiti Abatement
(916) 746-1021

Police News & Crime Alert Emails:
www.roseville.ca.us/enotify

RCONA
(Roseville Coalition Of Neighborhood Associations)
www.RCONA.org

