

Distracted Driving



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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

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Did you know that nearly 80% of vehicle crashes involve some form of driver inattention? According to the National Safety Council (NSC), distracted driving is estimated to be the root cause of between 20% and 30% of all motor vehicle accidents in the United States each year.

Activities that are distractions when performed while driving include:

- Talking or texting on a cell phone
- Entering data on a GPS unit
- Putting on make-up
- Changing a CD or the song on the radio
- Shaving
- Talking to the kids in the back seat or another passenger

Facts about using cell phones while driving (from NSC):

- Cell phone use is the most common distraction for drivers
- An estimated 10% of drivers in typical daylight are using some type of phone, hand-held or hands-free device
- Talking, listening, and dialing are equally dangerous. Hands-free cell phone conversations are as distracting as those on a handheld device
- The slower reaction time caused by cell phone use is comparable to that of people who are legally drunk (.08 blood alcohol content)

A 2001 study by researchers at the University of Utah concluded that:

- Cell phone usage while driving resulted in slower response time for drivers, **regardless of whether the cell phone was handheld or hands-free**
- Talking on a cell phone while driving can take the driver's attention away from the visual environment and cause what the researchers called "inattention blindness" – a situation where the driver doesn't register or recognize objects in his or her visual field.

Now that you know that nearly 80% of crashes involve some form of driver inattention, please make a conscious effort to minimize your distractions while driving.

Please contact EH&S at 213-740-6448 for more information.

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