

Safety Newsletter

April 2023
ISSUE

"Self-insured Workers' Compensation Fund Members"

Distracted Driving Awareness Month

What Is Distracted Driving?

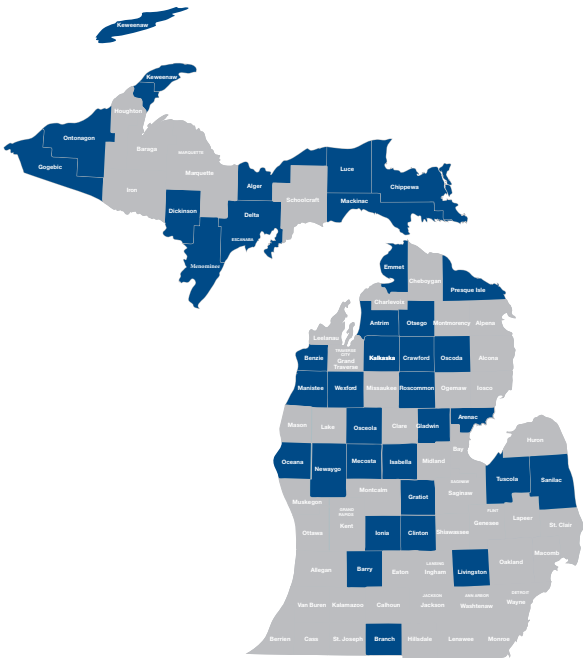
Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with the stereo, entertainment or navigation system — anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving.

Texting is the most alarming distraction. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for 5 seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

You cannot drive safely unless the task of driving has your full attention. Any non-driving activity you engage in is a potential distraction and increases your risk of crashing.

Consequences

Using a cell phone while driving creates enormous potential for deaths and injuries on U.S. roads. In 2020, 3,142 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers.



Key Insights & Statistics

Drivers were 30% more distracted in February 2022 than they were in February 2020, making it the worst month for phone distraction in the U.S. since 2019.

In 2022, distracted driving broke its seasonal patterns of high in the summer and low in the winter, becoming a constant throughout the entire year.

Speeding is still above pre-pandemic levels, but it's well below the highs of 2020.

Distracted driving spikes at night between 6:00 pm and 11:00 pm. In 2020, distracted driving was a reported factor in 8.1% of fatal motor vehicle crashes. (NHTSA)

In the U.S, distracted driving claimed the lives of 3,477 people and injured another 391,000 in 2015. (NHTSA)

42% of high school students across the United States admitted that they text or email while driving.

Roughly 20% of injuries occurring in car accident crashes involve distracted driving. (NHTSA)

Distracted driving accounted for 27% of all crashes in 2015.
(ENDDD)

Distracted driving claims eight lives per day — approximately 3,500 per year (CDC).

More than 400,000 motorists were injured in accidents caused by distracted driving and 2,800 deaths occurred as a result. (CDC)

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Distracted driving statistics 2021

In January of 2021, The NHTSA reached out to American drivers to understand the habits they engage in behind the wheel of a car. While many claim they never drive while distracted, others admit to engaging in many other behaviors while driving, including texting while driving.

52.5% of respondents reporting eating while driving, down 4.2% from last year's respondents. Other behaviors include:

- Texting (23.6%)
- Taking photos (11.7%)
- Applying makeup (6.5%)
- 3.4% admitted to drinking while driving!

Our survey also looked into how many Americans view distracted driving, either as dangerous or not.

36.4% of participants completely agree that using a mobile device hinders your ability to drive, yet 36% admit to engaging in activities with a cellphone while driving.

Less than half of participants completely agree that texting and driving is just as dangerous as drinking and driving, despite numerous studies proving both activities limit your capacity for awareness and focus.

Only 4.1% of participants ages 25-34 claimed they felt a high degree of pressure to respond to text messages while driving. In total, 12.1% of respondents in that age group felt any pressure to answer a text at all.

17.9% of the age group 18-24 felt the most pressure to respond to a text while driving. Interestingly, it is also this age group that is most often in accidents.

What number of vehicle accidents are caused by distracted driving in Michigan?

14,236

Distracted driving is a leading cause of auto accidents in Michigan. In 2020, distracted drivers caused 14,236 reported accidents. This accounts for 6% of all reported crashes in that year. Out of those distracted driving-related crashes, 5,560 people were injured and 52 individuals lost their lives.

The distracted driving statistics show that auto accidents involving distracted drivers have increased 11% in the U.S. and 27% in Michigan over the last five years.

There are three main types of distraction:

- Visual - taking your eyes off the road
- Manual - taking your hands off the wheel
- Cognitive - taking your mind off the drive

Texting is the most alarming distraction because it involves all three types of distraction.

Distracting activities include:

Texting or messaging

- Checking social media
- Talking on the phone, even hands-free
- Watching videos
- Eating, drinking, or smoking
- Grooming
- Looking after children or pets
- Chatting with passengers
- Searching or reaching for an item
- Looking at crashes or roadside sights
- Checking a navigation system
- Reading anything, including maps
- Adjusting climate or music controls
- Listening to loud music

How not to be distracted:

- Use your phone's Do Not Disturb feature or an app to silence calls and texts.
- Put your phone in the glove box or elsewhere to curb the urge to look at it.
- Avoid eating, drinking, and smoking while driving.
- Never attempt to read while driving, including a map.
- Do not do any personal grooming or adjust your clothing while driving.
- Avoid a lot of interaction with passengers.

How not to be distracted: (cont.)

- Emotions can interfere with driving. Do not drive when you are angry or upset.
- Keep music at a reasonable level, and avoid using headphones or earbuds.
- Pull over to a safe location and park your vehicle if you need to make or take a call.
- Do not drive with a pet on your lap.
- Ask a passenger to help navigate, change the music, or monitor your texts.
- Pull over to a safe place to address situations involving children.
- Do not daydream when you are behind the wheel.

April, which is national Distracted Driving Awareness Month:

Is a good time to regroup and take responsibility for the choices we make when we're on the road.

Follow these safety tips for a safe ride every time:

- Need to send a text?
- Pull over and park your car in a safe location.
- According to a phone company survey, almost 100% of teens agree that texting and driving is dangerous, but half admitted to doing it anyway.

How is distracted driving awareness spread?

Distracted Driving Awareness Month

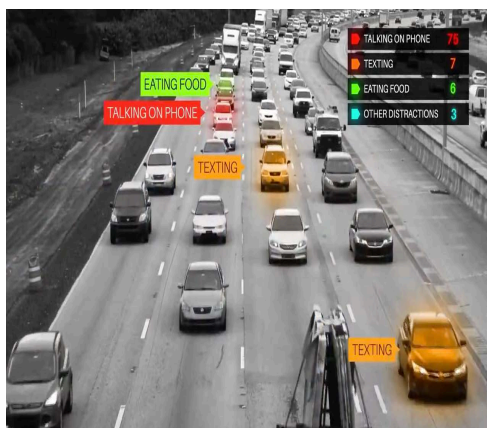
- Turning off all electronic devices.
- Placing them somewhere out of reach before you start driving.
- Set a good example for young drivers in the car.
- Talk with teens about responsible driving.
- If you are a passenger, speak up if the driver uses an electronic device while driving.

At least **8 people a day** are killed in distracted driving crashes. Distracted driving isn't just risky for you, it can be deadly for every nearby driver, pedestrian, bicyclist and worker.

Put down the phone and pay attention;

April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month.

It may take only a matter of seconds to glance at your phone, but, if you are driving at 60 miles an hour, your eyes were blind to the road while you drove the length of a football field. Please don't text and drive.



Focus on Your Drive

Before you start out:



Program GPS



Set up playlist



Silence and put away your phone

Set up your drive while you're still in "Park."



nsc.org/justdrive