



**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:**

- **Ban Driving While Texting**
- **Texting + Driving**
- **AWTTW—A Word to the Wise**
- **EOM End of Message**
- **Safety Tips for Cell Phone Use**
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# Hats ON for Safety

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 11

MARCH 2009

## R U Guilty of DWT?

### **Dis- traced Driving?**

Talk to any parent of a toddler about distracted driving.



I don't know that I know anyone who hasn't driven and talked on a cellphone. Drivers talking on their cellphones seem relatively harmless, at least when compared to drivers who are staring at their cellphones, texting. An estimated 20 percent of drivers are sending or receiving text messages while behind the wheel, according to a Nationwide Insurance study. And, according to another poll, that number skyrockets to 66 percent when drivers 18 to 24

are isolated. The practice, especially popular among young people, is exacting a deadly toll.

### **Ban Driving While Texting** By Anita Kumar Washington Post

Some lawmakers want drivers to take their thumbs off the keyboards and put them back on the steering wheel while cruising down roads.

They are tackling the problem of drivers who send, read and write messages on cellphones, PDAs and BlackBerrys. It's a thoroughly modern distraction dubbed Driving While Texting or DWT.

### **Texting + Driving = Danger**

Americans love the convenience and sense of security cell phones give us. The number of cell phones is growing and they're being used in more ways than just talking—such as text messaging, picture messaging, and Internet surfing. Has this useful device become a danger in the hands of inconsiderate users and distracted drivers?



In California, 25 people lost their lives and 135 were injured in a September 12, 2008 commuter train accident. Records show the driver of the train received two text messages seconds before the accident. As of January 1, 2009, drivers in Califor-

nia are no longer able to TXT while driving. This includes sending, reading and writing, folks. Those found conducting the illegal action will face a \$20 fine the first time and a \$50 for each recurring violation. "Banning electronic text messaging while driving will keep driv-

ers' hands on the wheel and their eyes on the road, making our roadways a safer place for all Californians," said Schwarzenegger. There you have it surfer dudes, no more TXT UR BFF while driving.

### AWTTW- A Word to the Wise

Make your employees aware of the dangers of texting while driving. Some large corporations have established bans on use of cell-phones while driving on company business—both as a safety precaution for their employees and to avoid possible liability. We urge you to consider this or other safety measures to encourage sensible use of cell phones in vehicles.

### EOM—End of Message

Wireless technology can be great. Benefits include calling for help in an accident, scheduling appointments and getting directions. But with all the distractions facing drivers, don't add to the situation by trying to send a text message while driving.

### Safety Tips for Cell Phone Use in Vehicle



- Don't hunt for a ringing phone that's out of reach.
- Pull over and stop to carry on a conversation
- If you must talk, keep it short.
- Have a passenger take the call and relay the high points.
- Don't address emotional or distressing issues while driving.
- Let calls go to voice mail instead of answering.
- Don't text and drive.

### BION— Believe it or Not

Recent studies and news stories seem to confirm that driving and texting is a very dangerous combination,

► According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study “driving while texting was associated with a 400% increase in the amount of time spent looking away from the road.

► A new study in Great Britain goes even farther. It shows that sending messages from cell phones while driving is more dangerous than climbing behind the wheel at the legal alcohol limit. (.08%)

### Text drivers are distracted in three ways.

**Mental workload**—Compounding text takes the mind off the road.

**Control**—Using the phone's keypad means only one hand (or a pinky or knee) is on the wheel.

**Visual attention**—Eyes are on the phone not the road.

When we add a human element to the statistics, the evidence can be sobering. The number of fatal accidents stemming from texting while driving is on the rise, especially among young drivers.

Seven states have banned texting: Alaska, California, Connecticut, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Jersey and Washington. In addition novice drivers are banned from texting in nine states: Delaware,

Maryland, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.



*Some information in this newsletter was taken from sfgate.com; crunchgear.com; textually.org; Federated Insurance Risk Management Strategies*