

SIX STEPS YOU CAN TAKE....

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE – Kids learn from their parents. Put down your phone while driving and only use it when you've safely pulled off the road.

TALK TO YOUR TEEN – Discuss the risks and responsibilities of driving, and the danger of dividing their attention between a cell phone and the road. Show them the statistic related to distracted driving. And urge them to talk to others; friends take care of friends.

ESTABLISH GROUND RULES – Set up family rules about not texting or talking on a handheld cell phone while behind the wheel.

SIGN A PLEDGE – Have your teen take action by agreeing to a family contract about wearing seat belts and not speeding, driving after drinking, or using a cell phone behind the wheel. Agree on penalties for violating the pledge, including paying for tickets or loss of driving privileges.

EDUCATE YOURSELF – Find out more about this tragic problem. View the information and resources available at www.distraction.gov and www.consumerreports.org/distracted. The more you know, the more you will understand the seriousness of this issue.

SPREAD THE WORD – Get involved in educating and promoting safe driving in your community and through online social-media websites. Talk to friends, family and co-workers.

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

On The Road... Off The Phone!!!

It's that simple!

Everyone has a role. We all have a stake in solving this problem, and we can all be a part of the solution. We must put our phones down; be a good example to our children, peers, and community; and insist that when riding with others, they do the same.



Sean F. Dalton, Gloucester County Prosecutor

**Gloucester County
Board of Chosen Freeholders**

Robert M. Damminger, Freeholder Director
Larry Wallace, Freeholder Liaison



Gloucester County's Distracted Driving Prevention Initiative



Watch our video at:

www.co.gloucester.nj.us/depts/p/prosoffice

or

<http://youtu.be/X78F-gsZMFg>

In today's world there are distractions all around us. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the National Safety Council (NSC) share concerns about the increasing incidence of distracted motorists due to the proliferation of available wireless communication devices.

Multiple studies concluded that using a wireless communications device while driving is the most significant distraction that affects driving performance.

- The No.1 source of driver inattention is use of a wireless device. (Virginia Tech/NHTSA)
- Distraction from cell phone use while driving (hand held or hands free) extends a driver's response time as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent. (University of Utah)
- Drivers that use cell phone are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves and others. (NHTSA, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)
- 10 percent of drivers aged 16 to 24 years old are on their phone at any one time.

- Driving while distracted is a factor in 25 percent of all police reported crashes, 20 percent in injury crashes and 16 percent in fatal crashes
- Driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent (Carnegie Mellon)

Distractions from cell phones and texting are especially significant for teen drivers. Teens are the most inexperienced drivers and also the group most likely to use a cell phone and particularly, text while driving.

Motor vehicle crashes are the No. 1 cause of death for 3 to 34 year olds. Nationally in 2009, 33,808 people died in motor vehicle crashes. Of those, 5,474 people were killed on U.S. roadways and approximately 448,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes that were reported to have involved distracted driving. Of the total distracted driving deaths, 995 (18%) specifically were reported as a result of some form of cell phone use while driving. It is believed that this statistic is seriously underreported since the data is gleaned, almost exclusively, from driver response when asked if they were using or texting on a cell phone when the crash occurred.

In New Jersey during 2010, a total of 299,575 reportable crashes occurred and 10,155 of them happened on the roadways in Gloucester County. Of the Gloucester crashes, 1,765 involved personal injuries and 19 fatalities. If the injury crashes were reduced by the national average of 20% due to cell phone use while driving, and the fatalities reduced by the national average of 16%, 353 people might have been spared injury and 3 lives might have been saved.

"Kulesh, Kubert and Bolis' Law"

Drivers will now face stiffer penalties in New Jersey for talking or texting while driving. A first offense now carries a fine of \$200. A second offense is \$400, and a third offense is \$600 and a possible license suspension. All increased fines will fund an anti-distracted driving program.

Drivers who are involved in a motor vehicle crash which results in serious bodily injury or death may also face criminal charges as a result. Cell phone usage may now give rise to an inference of recklessness. The penalty for vehicular homicide carries a State Prison sentence of 5-10 years.