



# Texting and Driving

## How to Prevent Distracted Driving Accidents

### What is the Problem?

Mobile communications are linked to a significant increase in distracted driving, resulting in injury and loss of life.<sup>1</sup> Distracted driving is any activity that could distract a person's attention away from the primary task of driving.<sup>2</sup>



### Facts

- In 2010, driver distraction was the cause of 18% of all fatal crashes.<sup>3</sup>
- 40% of all American teens say they have been in a car when the driver used a cell phone in way that put people in danger.<sup>4</sup>
- There are three main types of distraction: manual, visual, and cognitive.<sup>5</sup>
- Texting takes your eyes off the road for 4.6 seconds, which at 55 MPH, is like driving an entire football field blindfolded.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2011, 3,331 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver, compared to 3,267 in 2010.<sup>7</sup>
- Text messaging creates a crash risk 23 times worse than driving while not distracted.<sup>8</sup>

### Prevention Tips

- **Become informed and be active.** Understand the dangers and risks surrounding texting and driving. Set rules for yourself and your household regarding distracted driving.<sup>9</sup>
- **Know the law.** Many states have laws that include cell phone and texting bans.<sup>10</sup>
- **Lead by example.** No one should text and drive. If you need to text or talk on the phone, pull over to a safe place.<sup>11</sup>



**Plan of the Week (POW):**

Distracted driving endangers life and property and the current levels of injury and loss are unacceptable.<sup>12</sup> **ALWAYS** pay attention to the primary task at hand; driving. **NEVER** text and drive.

**References**

- 1, 3, 4, 12 The Dangers of Texting While Driving. Federal Communications Commission. <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/texting-while-driving>. Accessed 21 May 2013.
- 2 One Text or Call Could Wreck It All. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and U.S. Department of Transportation. <http://www.distraction.gov/>. Accessed 21 May 2013.
- 5-11 What is Distracted Driving? National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and U.S. Department of Transportation. <http://www.distraction.gov/content/get-the-facts/facts-and-statistics.html>. Accessed 21 May 2013.

**NMCPHC Injury Prevention and Violence Free Living Webpage**

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/injury-violence-free-living/Pages/injury-violence-free-living.aspx>

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