



Weekly Safety Meeting

The Law and Cell Phones While Driving

In the United States, texting while driving is a major legal violation. According to the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), 49 states, Washington, DC and many US territories have banned texting while driving. Montana is the only state that does not have a statewide ban on texting while driving.

Law enforcement agencies take text messaging while driving and handheld cell phone bans very seriously. In most jurisdictions, these laws are enforced under primary enforcement rules. This means an officer can pull you over and issue a ticket solely for seeing you text—no other traffic violation is required. Furthermore, 29 states, Washington, DC and many US territories have enacted complete handheld device bans, making it illegal to even hold a phone while operating a vehicle. This goes for driving with a CDL as well. Seeing you using a device with a screen can be the primary reason for getting pulled over. Texting while driving a large truck is especially dangerous and you can lose your CDL if you are caught.

Drivers face stricter cell phone penalties than ever before, and with good reason: distracted driving is a leading cause of severe injuries and preventable fatalities on our highways.

Under national safety campaigns like the NHTSA's "Put the Phone Away or Pay", police departments frequently run high-visibility enforcement windows to penalize distracted drivers and reduce road casualties.

Distracted Driving Statistics

Data compiled by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) reveals the true danger of taking your eyes off the road:

- **3,208 Lives Lost:** In 2024 alone, distracted driving claimed 3,208 lives in motor vehicle crashes.
- **315,167 Injuries:** Over 315,000 individuals suffered injuries in distraction-related traffic accidents in a single year.
- **The Football Field Blind Spot:** Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for an average of 5 seconds. At 55 mph, that is equivalent to driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.
- **23x Accident Risk:** Drivers who actively text while operating a vehicle are 23 times more likely to be involved in a car crash than attentive drivers.
- **37% Attention Drop:** Simply engaging with a mobile phone reduces a driver's cognitive brain attention allocated to driving by up to 37%.

It takes a safety mindset to resist texting while driving. Remaining safe on the road requires intentional, undistracted focus.

Safe Cell Phone Habits While Driving Include:

Setting up your device before you start driving. This is always a good idea since many devices won't let you program a GPS manually while you are moving. Most states have a hands-free driving law, and discourage messing around with your phone cables, etc. while your vehicle is moving.

Program your GPS routes, adjust your mirrors, and select your audio playlists before you ever take the vehicle out of park.

Designate a Co-Pilot. If traveling with a co-worker or family member old enough to use a phone, let them be in charge on the phone. If you are traveling with passengers, appoint a "designated texter" to handle navigation updates, music adjustments, and urgent replies.

Pull Over for Emergencies: If you do have your device plugged in and something requires you to take your eyes off the road, pull over and put on your hazard lights. If a communication cannot wait, safely pull over to the shoulder or a parking lot before interacting with your device.

Activate "Do Not Disturb." If turning off notifications and incoming calls/texts is an option, use your smartphone's built-in driving mode to automatically silence incoming texts and notifications while the vehicle is in motion.

Stow the Device. If not answering calls is an option, and you are just carrying your phone for your own safety reasons, place your phone entirely out of sight and reach. "Out of sight, out of mind" helps you avoid the temptation to touch your phone. Keep it in the glove compartment, a bag, or the trunk so you aren't tempted to look at it during red lights.

DON'T DRIVE DISTRATED....FOCUS ON THE ROAD!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

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