



# Distracted Drivers

## Did you know?

- ✓ Distractions are a factor in 20 - 30% of all vehicle crashes; and,
- ✓ You are 23 times more likely to be involved in a crash if you are texting

## What is the definition of a driving distraction?

A distraction while driving is defined as:

*A diversion of attention from the driving task not related to impairment from alcohol, fatigue or medical condition.*

Diversion occurs because the driver is temporarily focusing on an object, task, event or person not related to the driving task.

Diversion reduces a driver's situational awareness, decision-making and/or performance which increases the risk of:

- Collisions
- Near-collisions

## Some of the distractions are:

- GPS or other navigational aids like maps
- Sound systems
- Video!!!
- Makeup and personal grooming like shaving
- How many more???

**The biggest culprit currently is the mobile device.**

Traffic Injury Research Foundation September 2011 survey stated:

**36.3%** of drivers admit to using their cell phone in

last 7 days while driving. 62.2% used them for 10 minutes or less (2011)

Compared to the same survey conducted in 2001 which stated:

**20.5%** used them in 2001. 57.5% used them for 10 minutes or less (2001)

*Overall more people are using phones but for shorter periods.*

**Mobile use is prohibited in Newfoundland & Labrador!!!!**

## Tailgate Tips:

It doesn't matter how good a driver you are, you cannot manage all of the tasks already associated with driving safely with added distraction.

Try these strategies:

- ✓ If you are unable to ignore your mobile device, turn it off or put it in the glove-box or trunk until you reach your destination. Then even if your initial good intentions are challenged, by a ringing phone or message alert, you will be unable to surrender to temptation.
- ✓ Don't cheat or fool yourself that checking the texts while stopped at a red light is okay.
- ✓ Change your voicemail message to one noting that you may be driving and will return the call later.
- ✓ Plan to eat before leaving and set aside enough time.
- ✓ Take a break and walk into a fast food outlet instead of doing the drive thru.
- ✓ Program your GPS before leaving and use the voice directions so that you minimize screen time.
- ✓ Put on your makeup, shave and finish getting ready for work before you leave home, not on the way!
- ✓ Focus on the driving task and not unrelated events, scenery or attractions.
- ✓ Plan to *STAY FOCUSED* on driving even when other distractions compete for your attention.
- ✓ How many more can you identify? What is your personal solution?

## Practical Challenge:

For this week, turn off your mobile device as you get in the car and ensure that it remains off whenever you are on the road!

Refrain from other distracting activities or observations.

**Be Safe!**