



Students^{for} Cellphone-Free Driving

Alberta Driver's Fact Sheet

The problem:

- In Alberta, motor vehicle collisions are a leading cause of unintentional death and injury¹
- Every week, 9 people die and nearly 500 are injured in motor vehicle collisions in Alberta²
- Driver distraction, including the use of cellphones and other electronic devices, is responsible for up to 80% of these collisions³
- Albertans are the worst offenders in Canada. At any given time, 1 in 10 Alberta drivers are using their cellphones while driving compared to the national average of 1 in 20⁴

If you **drive while talking** on your cellphone:

- You are four to six times more likely to be involved in a collision⁵
- Your reaction time is slowed by 18%⁵
- You double your risk of having a rear-end collision⁵
- You increase your risk of running red lights⁶
- You may be more impaired (i.e. more accidents and less responsive driving behavior) than a legally intoxicated driver⁷

Having a cellphone conversation is **more** distracting than talking to a passenger:

- When compared with no distractions, cellphone use negatively impacts lane keeping, increases following distance and impairs navigation; on the other hand, passenger conversation has little effect on all three measures¹⁰
- During passenger conversations, the production of speech by the driver and the complexity of speech used by both the driver and the passenger drop in response to an increase in the demand of traffic¹⁰
- The topic of passenger conversations often include the traffic, as passengers help the driver navigate and warn the driver of hazards¹⁰



Hands-free devices are not safer:

- You are still four times more likely to be involved in a collision while talking on a hands-free device⁸
- Your visual field attention is reduced⁹
- It is the conversation, and not the electronic device itself, that is the distraction

If you drive while reading or writing text messages:

- Your reaction time is slowed by 35%¹¹
- Your ability to maintain lateral vehicle control is decreased and you are at greater risk of drifting into another lane¹¹
- You may be at a greater collision risk than if you are driving at the legal alcohol limit or under the influence of marijuana¹¹

References:

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LINK< <http://www.acicr.ualberta.ca/>>

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⁴Road Safety and Motor Vehicle Regulation Directorate. Observational Survey of Cell Phone use by Drivers of Light Duty Vehicles 2006 – 2007. Transport Canada, 2008. <http://www.tc.gc.ca/roadsafety/tp/tp2436/rs200802/menu.htm>. Accessed July 16, 2009.

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⁶Strayer et al, Johnston W.A. Driven to distraction: Dual-task studies of simulated driving and conversing on a cellular telephone. Psychological Science 2001; 12(6): 462-6.

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⁹Barkana et al. Visual field attention is reduced by concomitant hands-free conversation on a cellular telephone. American Journal of Ophthalmology 2004; 138(3): 347-53.

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¹¹Reed, N., & R. Robbins. The effect of text messaging on driver behavior: a simulator study. Transport Research Laboratory, © 2008.

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