

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Distracted driving is a public health issue that affects us all. The latest statistics show motor vehicle fatalities are up 6% from 2015. More than 40,000 people were killed on our nation's roadways last year, and distracted driving is a major contributor. Each distracted driving death is 100% preventable.

Many distractions exist while driving, but cell phones are a top distraction because so many drivers have access to them and use them for long periods of time each day. Almost everyone has seen a driver distracted by a cell phone, but when you are the one distracted, you often don't realize that driver is you!

THE THREE TYPES OF DISTRACTED DRIVING AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

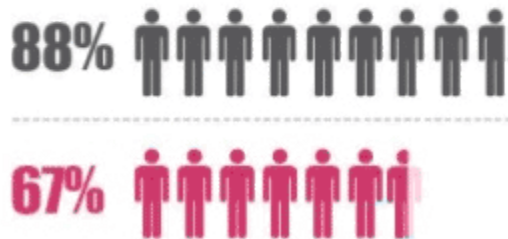
 VISUAL	 MANUAL	 COGNITIVE
		
<p>Keep your eyes on the road.</p> <p>Pull over to read directions.</p> <p>Put your phone in "Do Not Disturb" mode.</p>	<p>Keep your phone out of reach.</p> <p>Make all adjustments before driving.</p> <p>Don't reach for items while driving.</p>	<p>Avoid phone calls, even hands-free.</p> <p>Stay focused on the road.</p> <p>Keep your emotions in check.</p>

The distractions go beyond cell phones though. Many cars are now equipped with infotainment systems that include GPS, text message reader, and even DVD capability. These infotainment systems can take the drivers eyes off the road and cause a distraction for even a split second, enough to cause an accident. Other vehicle occupants, eating, smoking, and applying make-up are also distractions to driving.

Delaware's hands free cell phone law has been in effect since 2011 and bans all drivers from using hand held smart phones, cell phones, tablets, laptops, games or other portable computers while driving. Drivers are not allowed to talk without using a hands-free device, read, write or send text messages, email or use the Internet while operating a motor vehicle. Drivers caught using a hand-held device will be fined \$100 for their first offense. Subsequent offenses will be no less than \$200 and no more than \$300.

88% Of Us Feel Threatened When Others Drivers Use Cell Phones

Yet 67% of us continue to use our cell phones



Here are some things you can do to stay focused while on the road:

- If you need to use your cell phone, pull off the road to a safe place where a call can be made.
- If you are drowsy, pull off the road.
- Limit the number of passengers, as well as the level of activity inside the vehicle.
- Avoid eating while driving.
- Do your multi-tasking outside the car.

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