Distracted Driving (Cellphone Use) Fatality Report



HOUSTON – The driver of a pickup truck that collided with a church minibus in rural Texas, killing 13 people, apologized after the crash and acknowledged he had been texting while driving, a witness said Friday.

Jody Kuchler told The Associated Press he was driving behind the truck and had seen it moving erratically prior to the Wednesday collision on a two-lane road about 75 miles west (120 km) of San Antonio, near the town of Concan. Kuchler said the truck had crossed the center line several times while he followed it.

Kuchler said he called the sheriff's offices for both Uvalde and Real counties while he followed the truck and told them "they needed to get him off the road before he hit somebody."

Kuchler said he witnessed the crash and afterward, he checked on both the bus and the truck and was able to speak with the driver, who has been identified by the Texas Department of Public Safety as 20-year-old Jack Dillon Young, of Leakey, Texas.

"He said, 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I was texting.' I said, "Son, do you know what you just did? He said, 'I'm sorry I'm sorry,'" Kuchler quoted the pickup driver as saying.

Department of Public Safety Sgt. Conrad Hein declined to comment on Friday on the cause of the crash or if texting might have played a role. But officials have said the truck driver appeared to have crossed the center line.

Young remains hospitalized following the crash.