Driving Distracted Meeting Kit



WHAT IS DISTRACTED DRIVING?

Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with the stereo, entertainment or navigation system – anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving.

DANGERS OF CELL PHONE USE

Cell phone usage ranks at the top of the list for distracting behaviors that increase your chances of being involved in a crash or near crash event.

1. Text messaging (or texting) on a cell phone – 23 times more likely
2. Talking on a cell phone – 4 to 5 times more likely
3. Reading – 3 times more likely
4. Applying makeup – 3 times more likely
5. Reaching for a moving object – 9 times more likely
6. Dialing on a hand-held device – 3 times more likely
7. Talking or listening on a hand-held device – 1.3 times more likely

Studies suggest driving while on a cell phone can be as dangerous as driving drunk. Not convinced? Try following drivers who are talking on the phone. Are they driving inconsistently, speeding up one minute and then slowing down the next? Do they change lanes unexpectedly or have difficulty staying in their own lane? Those are all telltale signs that a driver is distracted by a cell phone.

OTHER CAUSES OF DISTRACTED DRIVING

- Surfing the internet
- Eating and drinking
- Adjusting the radio
- Shaving

PREVENTING DRIVING DISTRACTORS

Before the Trip:

- Give yourself plenty of travel time and make sure you're well rested and alert.
- Review all maps and directions and pre-program your route on your vehicle's global positioning system (GPS).
- Stow and secure loose objects.
- Prepare children and other passengers with everything they need. Don't forget to secure pets too.
- Lastly, pre-set the controls on your vehicle's climate control system and audio system.

During the Trip:

- Let calls go to voicemail and don't read or return texts. Do not surf the Internet or read emails. If you think you'll be tempted to check your phone, turn it off or place it in your vehicle's glove compartment.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke, apply makeup or engage in any other grooming activities.

THE CHECKLIST TO AVOID DISTRACTING DRIVING

1. Fully focus on driving. Do not let anything divert your attention, actively scan the road, use your mirrors and watch out for pedestrians and cyclists.
2. Store loose gear, possessions and other distractions that could roll around in the car, so you do not feel tempted to reach for them on the floor or the seat.
3. Make adjustments before your get underway. Address vehicle systems like your GPS, seats, mirrors, climate controls and sound systems before hitting the road. Decide on your route and check traffic conditions ahead of time.
4. Finish dressing and personal grooming at home – before you get on the road.
5. Snack smart. If possible, eat meals or snacks before or after your trip, not while driving. On the road, avoid messy foods that can be difficult to manage.
6. Secure children and pets before getting underway. If they need your attention, pull off the road safely to care for them.
7. Put aside your electronic distractions. Don't use cell phones while driving – handheld or hands-free – except in absolute emergencies. Never use text messaging, email functions, video games or the internet with a wireless device, while driving.
8. If you have passengers, enlist their help so you can focus safely on driving.
9. If another activity demands your attention, instead of trying to attempt it while driving, pull off the road and stop your vehicle in a safe place.
10. If you cannot devote your full attention to driving because of some other activity, it's a distraction.
11. Review your company's cell phone policy, if one exists, and abide by it when driving or operating machinery and equipment including forklifts and backhoes.
12. Familiarize yourself with any motor vehicle laws pertaining to cell phones, especially when traveling out of state or province.
13. Limit phone use to when you are parked or ask a passenger to make calls for you.
14. Never have stressful or emotional conversations while driving.

FINAL WORD

Safe driving demands your undivided attention. Keep your eyes and your mind on the road. Driving and multitasking can never safely coexist. If you need to make or take a phone call, check driving directions or select some different music, pull over into a safe place.