

## SAFETY TALK

# › Distracted Driving

## The Hard Truth

According to the National Safety Council, there were over 40,000 deaths resulting from motor vehicle accidents in 2016 and 2017. One of the biggest contributing factors was found to be distracted driving. Roughly 26% of all fatalities are the result of some form of distraction, preventing the driver from identifying potential hazards while behind the wheel.

## What is Distracted Driving?

Distracted driving is **ANY** activity that diverts attention away from driving the vehicle. It includes:

- Talking or texting
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to people in your vehicle
- Adjusting the radio, GPS, or entertainment system
- Anything else that takes your attention away from driving!!



## Breaking Down Distracted Driving

Scientists have identified the types of distractions that occur while driving and placed them into three main categories:

1. **Visual** - Anything that pulls your eyes away from driving duties, such as your cell phone or navigation device, or stereo; looking in the sun visor mirror; talking to passengers; etc.
2. **Manual** - Anything that requires the use of your hands and requires you to remove them from the steering wheel such as eating or drinking, reaching for items, etc.
3. **Cognitive** - Anything that takes your mind off the task of operating your motor vehicle. Using hands-free devices, thinking about things other than driving, stress, illness, and daydreaming are just a few examples of cognitive distractions.

## What Can I do to Prevent Distracted Driving?

### Cell Phone Off

Turn your cell phone off and place it out of sight and reach!

### Set Essential Controls

Before you back out of your parking spot, queue up the playlist you want to hear, set climate controls to a comfortable level, and program any destinations into your GPS.

### Review Your Route

When you're headed for an unfamiliar destination, review your directions and study your route ahead of time. Use Google Map's Street View to get a 3D look at your destination, so you'll have a mental picture to help you find your address.

### Manage Your Time

Rushing tends to promote distraction, road rage, and taking unnecessary risks. Whenever possible, leave a few minutes early so you can arrive at your destination stress free.

### Prep at Home

Get ready for work before getting in your car. Shaving and putting on deodorant or makeup are much easier and safer when done in your own bathroom.

### Battle Complacency

Complacency is something we must battle on a daily basis. Driving the same routes, doing the same activities, give drivers a false sense of safety that makes us less aware of the hazards and potential outcomes that are merely a few seconds or a couple feet away every time we are behind the wheel.

