



Mobile Phone Usage

Monthly Training Topic
NV Transport Inc.
Safety & Loss
Prevention



Introduction



Benefits to Mobile Phone while on the road:

- *Peace of mind for family and loved ones*
- *Provides help and security in the event of a breakdown/ accident*
- *Decrease accident response times*
- *Increase life saving outcomes*
- *More efficient apprehension of criminals (drunk drivers)*

Although there are benefits, there is a downside to having a mobile phone in the vehicle with you.

- *Difficulty ignoring a phone call or a text message*
- *Phone calls create a visual (looking at the phone), physical (dialing a phone number), audio (listening to the caller), and mental (paying attention to conversation) distraction*
- *Text messaging creates a mental, visual and physical distraction*
- *“It won’t happen to me” – many people believe they are good at multitasking, therefore an accident will not happen to them*

Introduction

National Safety Council Statement:

“A driver’s first responsibility is the safe operation of the vehicle and that best practice is to not use electronic devices including cell phones while driving. When on the road, drivers shall concentrate on safe and defensive driving and not on making or receiving phone calls, delivery of faxes, using computers, navigation systems, or other distracting influences. When a driver decides that it is safe to use such a device while driving, it should be with the understanding that negligent drivers be held accountable when distracted driving results in the injury or death of others.”



Facts & Statistics

Text messaging creates a crash risk 23 times worse than driving while not distracted.

Sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent-at 55 mph-of driving the length of an entire football field, blind.

In 2009, 16% of fatal crashes involved reports of distracted driving

In 2009, 5,474 people were killed in crashes involving driver distraction, and an estimated 448,000 were injured.

Drivers who use hand-held devices are 4 times more likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves.

Drivers reaching for an object, such as a cell phone, while driving are three times more likely to be involved in a crash or other safety-critical event.

Above facts and statistics obtained from the following websites: Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, The AAA Foundation, The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, The National Highway Safety Administration, The National Safety Council



Hand Held Cell Phone Ban

The FMCSA and PHMSA issued a final rule that restricts the use of hand-held mobile telephones by interstate commercial motor vehicle drivers (CMV) and intrastate hazmat drivers. The rule does not restrict or prohibit the use of hands-free devices. The final rule was published in the Federal Register on December 2nd, 2011 and will take effect on January 3rd, 2012.

- *Changes - the final rule prohibits CMV drivers from holding, dialing, or reaching for a hand-held cellular phone. This includes all push-to-talk functions. Hands-free use of a cellular phone is allowed. The ban does not prohibit or restrict the use of Citizen Band Radios, GPS, or fleet management systems.*
 - **Dialing** – As defined by FMCSA, a driver is allowed to initiate, answer, or terminate a call by touching a single button on a mobile telephone or on a headset. This action should not require the driver to take his or her eyes off the road.
 - **Reaching** – FMCSA banned reaching for a cellular phone or hands-free device that is done in “an unacceptable and unsafe manner.” Examples of this behavior would be reaching for a cellular phone on the passenger seat, under the driver’s seat, or into the sleeper berth. To be in compliance with the rule, a driver must have a cellular phone and/or hands-free device within “close proximity” to his or her person.
- *Driver and Motor Carrier Penalties:*
 - *Under the final rule, CMV drivers who are convicted of a hand-held cell violation twice within a three year period will be disqualified for 60 days.*
 - *If convicted for a third violation within three years the driver will be disqualified for 120 days.*
 - *Drivers will be subject to federal civil penalties of up to \$2,750 for each offense. Motor carriers that allow their drivers to use hand-held cell phones while operating a commercial motor vehicle face a maximum civil penalty of \$11,000 per violation.*

Safe Operating Procedures

Safe driving is YOUR responsibility. Always keep your eyes on the road and hands on the wheel. Never text or send emails from your phone while driving, even at stop lights or in traffic

If you need to place a phone call, safely pull off the road into a secure area, park your vehicle and place the call

If your phone rings while you are driving, let it go to voicemail

If the regulations allow you to use a phone/hands free device, keep your conversations short. Short and simple communications should be the norm when in any traffic conditions.

Know and follow the rules and regulations of state and local laws. These regulations will vary from state to state, jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

Know and follow your company's policy and procedures around mobile phone usage.



When to Avoid Using a Mobile Phone

Avoid using any mobile phone devices, even hands-free, while driving in potentially hazardous conditions including:

- ***Driving in heavy or congested traffic***
- ***Driving in construction zones***
- ***Driving on slippery roads***
- ***Driving in poor visibility (e.g., fog, rain, snow,)***
- ***Driving in residential areas, school zones, or areas with children playing***
- ***Driving near railroad crossings; or in parking lot***
- ***Driving in parking lots; Backing; or transporting H/M***

The only exception to this rule is when there is an emergency. Before making the call, determine if the call can be made safely.

- ***Reporting Collisions to emergency personnel***
- ***Calling law enforcement for assistance***
- ***Reporting road hazards to authorities***
- ***Notifying authorities of a reckless/ erratic driver***



Enhancements to Mobile Phone Usage

The following devices/ features may assist you while operating a motor vehicle and attempting to use a cell phone:

- ***Hands Free Devices – Allows a driver to keep both hands on the wheel, but looking for your hands free device when you wish to make or receive a call can overcome the beneficial aspects of using the device.***
- ***Voice Activated – Can reduce the distractions related to manually dialing numbers.***
- ***Push to Talk – Devices that act like a radio can further reduce the distractions related to dialing, but generally require the driver to remove one hand from the wheel. In addition, the relative ease of using these devices can lead to more frequent and unnecessary calls.***
- ***Voicemail and Caller ID – A driver is less likely to answer an incoming call while driving or in a hazardous situation if they know that a message or phone number will be left. Voice mail and caller id allow a driver to safely park a vehicle before returning the call.***

It is important to remember that these devices/ enhancements are only options to assist you while driving. These devices do not eliminate the risks associated with mobile phone usage and should not be considered as impervious alternatives.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: *Does cell phone use while driving cause traffic crashes?*

A: *Research shows that driving while using a cell phone can pose a serious cognitive distraction and degrade driver performance. The data is insufficient to quantify crashes caused by cell phone use specifically, but NHTSA estimates that driver distraction from all sources contributes to 25 percent of all police-reported traffic crashes.*

Q: *Is it safe to use hands-free (headset, speakerphone, or other device) cell phones while driving?*

A: *While a hands-free device does allow a driver to keep both hands on the wheel, the device does not diminish the distractions associated with dialing. In addition, the available research indicates that whether it is a hands-free or hand-held cell phone, the cognitive distraction is significant enough to degrade a driver's performance. This can cause a driver to miss key visual and audio cues needed to avoid a crash.*



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can technology eliminate driver distractions?

A: As a whole, technology causes more distractions than it prevents. However, in the case of cell phone usage technology such as; one touch dialing, voice dialing, and hands free devices significantly reduce the risks associated with cell phone usage while driving.

Q: Does the new hand held cell phone ban apply to me?

A: The rule applies to all commercial motor vehicles operating with interstate commerce. This includes all vehicles (even if they stay within the state) that transport goods that came from or will travel to a different state.

Q: Is talking on a cell phone any worse than having a conversation with someone in the car?

A: Any activity a driver engages while driving has the potential to distract the driver from the primary task of driving. Some research suggests cell phone use to passenger conversations are equally as risky while others show cell phone use to be more risky

Quiz

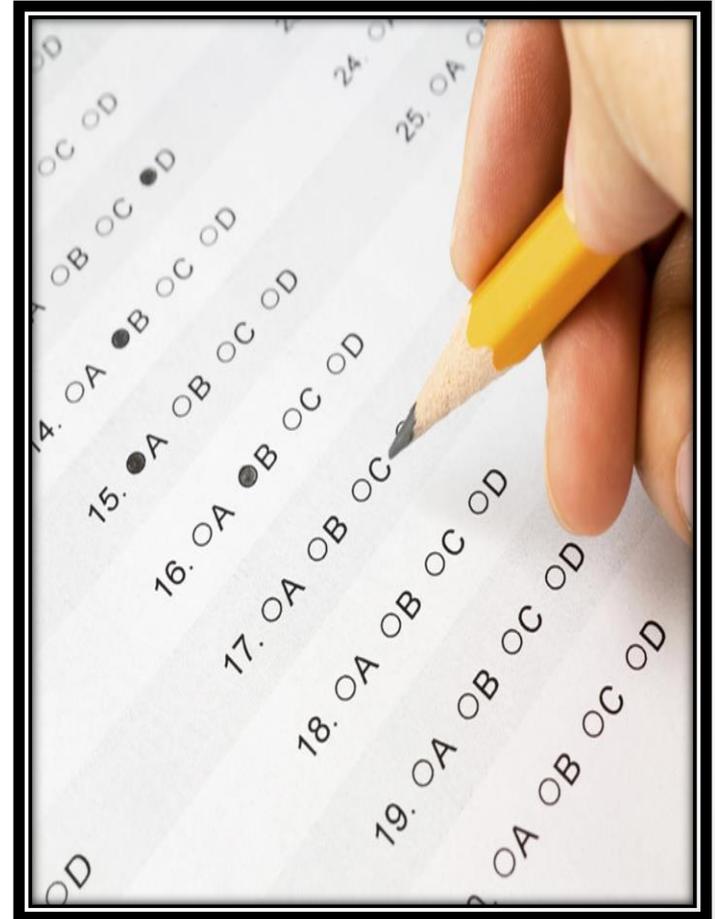
1. **True or False?** Using a hands free device eliminates the risks associated with using a cell phone while operating a vehicle?
2. **True or False?** Driver distraction is one significant cause of motor vehicle collisions
3. **True or False?** The risks of driving while operating a cell phone outweigh the benefits
4. **True or False?** The new cell phone ban prohibits the use of CB Radios and GPS devices
5. **True or False?** It is safe to use a mobile phone in heavy traffic to tell someone you will be late
6. **True or False?** Local laws, state laws and federal regulations are all the same when it comes to cell phone usage
7. **True or False?** Cell phones create a visual, audio, mental and physical distraction to drivers

Quiz

8. **What is a driver's first responsibility when it comes to mobile phone usage?**
- A. **Never send text messages and use a hands free device at all times**
 - B. **Avoid long conversations while talking on the phone and to other passengers in the vehicle**
 - C. **Reaching for a mobile phone while trying not to take your eyes off of the road**
 - D. **The safe operation of the vehicle and that best practice is to not use cell phones while driving**
9. **If your cell phone rings while you are driving down the road, what is the safest course of action?**
- A. **Reach for the cell phone only while driving down a straight road**
 - B. **Quickly pull on to the shoulder of the road to retrieve the call**
 - C. **Let your voicemail pick up the call**
 - D. **Send a text message to inform the caller that you are driving**
 - E. **All of the above**
10. **You should avoid using your cell phone, including hands free devices, completely while driving through which situation?**
- A. **Inclement Weather**
 - B. **School zone**
 - C. **Heavy traffic**
 - D. **Parking lots**
 - E. **All of the above**

Quiz Answers

1. *False*
2. *True*
3. *True*
4. *False*
5. *False*
6. *False*
7. *True*
8. *D*
9. *C*
10. *E*



Question or Comments?



Additional Information on Rules and Regulations

This document is intended to be a guide on applicable rules and regulations. Although it may be used as a guide/reference for your training needs, this document is not intended to be used as the standard for FMCSA rules and regulations.

Additional information can be found on the FMCSA website.

The FMCSA website will contain the most accurate and up-to-date information on any and all applicable rules and regulations.

<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov>

