

PLAYING IT **SAFE**

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Dangers of Texting While Driving

Dangerous behind-the-wheel practices lead to fatalities

According to the American Automobile Association (AAA), for every two seconds that a driver's eyes stray away from the road, he/she is twice as likely to have an accident. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) also claims that driver inattention is the leading contributing factor in most crashes or near-miss accidents in the United States.

Inattention on the Road

Of all crashes, 80 percent (and 65 percent of near-crashes) involve driver inattention within a three-second window of the incident. The moral of the story: When motorists change radio stations, try to read maps or talk on cell phones, they are putting themselves and others at risk.

How Texting is Unique

The latest danger to hit the roadways in recent years is texting while driving. AAA claims that texting requires a motorist's full attention, which obviously inhibits attention to the road. This concern is by no means limited to everyday drivers; inattention due to texting has caused many occupational drivers to be involved in deadly roadway crashes. Consider the following instances:

- A Boston trolley driver missed a red light while

texting his girlfriend and smashed into another trolley. This accident injured 50 people.

- A Florida truck driver killed two young women when he hit their vehicle because he was texting.
- An attorney in Nevada rolled his company-issued SUV because he failed to pay attention due to texting.

It's Against the Law

Many states have laws outlawing the use of cell phones and texting while driving. To avoid a ticket and a potentially dangerous accident, do not use your cell phone in any capacity while driving. If you must make a phone call or text, pull off the road safely and then do so. No message is more important than saving someone's life.



Reasons for the Danger

Texting is a prevalent cause of roadway crashes because full driver attention is crucial, and it is virtually impossible to watch the road and text simultaneously. Would you want drivers around you on the road to text while at the wheel?

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