**2023 *U DRIVE. U TEXT. U PAY.*
Fact Sheet — Enforcement**

Distracted driving comes in many forms, but texting and cell phone use while driving has become the most prevalent type of distracted driving. **[Local Public Official]** wants to help spread the word that **[State/Local Law Enforcement Organization]** is teaming up with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for the 2023 *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.* campaign. From April 3-10, 2023, law enforcement officers will work together to enforce texting and distracted-driving laws.

### Staggering Statistics

### According to NHTSA, 32,657 people died in distraction-affected crashes over the ten-year period from 2012 to 2021. A distraction-affected crash is any traffic crash in which a driver was identified as distracted at the time of the crash.

### In 2021 there were 3,522 people killed and an estimated additional 362,415 people injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes involving distracted drivers. This is an increase of 380 fatalities compared to 2020.

### Distracted-driving crashes accounted for 8% of all fatal crashes, 14% of injury crashes and 13% of all police-reported motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2021.

### Five percent of all drivers involved in fatal traffic crashes in 2021 were reported as distracted at the time of the crashes. Seven percent of drivers 15 to 20 years old involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted. This age group has the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted at the time of the fatal crashes.

### Drivers in the:

### 15-20 age group made up 8 percent of drivers in fatal crashes but were 11 percent of all distracted drivers and 16 percent of drivers distracted by cell phones in fatal crashes.

### 21-24 age group made up 9 percent of drivers in fatal crashes but were 11 percent of all distracted drivers and 15 percent of drivers distracted by cell phones in fatal crashes.

### 25-34 age group made up 22 percent of drivers in fatal crashes but were 25 percent of all distracted drivers and 30 percent of drivers distracted by cell phones in fatal crashes.

### During a typical daylight moment in 2021, an estimated 373,066 passenger vehicle drivers were holding cell phones to their ears while driving.

### In 2021 there were 644 nonoccupants (pedestrians, pedalcyclists, and others) killed in distraction-affected traffic crashes.

**Economic Costs Associated With Distracted Driving[[1]](#endnote-1)**

* The estimated economic cost of all motor vehicle traffic crashes in the United States in 2019 (the most recent year for which cost data is available) was $340 billion, of which $98 billion resulted from distracted-driving crashes.
	+ Included in the economic costs are lost productivity, workplace costs, legal and court costs, medical costs, emergency medical services, insurance administration costs, congestion impacts, and property damage.
* These costs represent the tangible losses that result from motor vehicle traffic crashes but fail to capture the relatively intangible value of lost quality-of-life that results from these injuries.
	+ When quality-of-life valuations are considered, the total value of societal harm from motor vehicle traffic crashes in the United States in 2019 was an estimated $1.37 trillion, of which $395 billion resulted from distracted-driving crashes.

### Safety Tips for Driving

* If you are expecting a text message or need to send one, pull over and park your car in a safe location. Once you are safely off the road and parked, it is safe to text.
* Designate your passenger as your “designated texter.” Allow them access to your phone to respond to calls or messages.
* Do not engage in social media scrolling or messaging while driving.
* Struggling to not text and drive? Activate your phone’s “Do Not Disturb” feature, or put your cell phone in the trunk, glove box, or back seat of your vehicle until you arrive at your destination.

### Put Your Phone Away or Pay

* When you get behind the wheel, be an example to your family and friends by putting your phone away. Just because other people do it doesn’t mean texting and driving is “normal” behavior.
* Handheld Device Use: 29 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands prohibit all drivers from using handheld devices in normal or special circumstances. All are primary enforcement laws — an officer may cite a driver for using a handheld cellphone without any other traffic offense taking place.
* All Cellphone Use: No state bans all cellphone use for all drivers, but 36 states and D.C. ban all cellphone use by novice drivers, and 23 states and D.C. prohibit it for school bus drivers.
* Text Messaging: In 48 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands, texting while driving is an illegal, ticketable offense. You could end up paying a hefty fine and get points on your license.
* If you see someone texting while driving, speak up. If friends text while driving, tell them to stop. Listen to your passengers: If they catch you texting while driving and tell you to put your phone away, put it down.
* Remember, when you get behind the wheel, *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.*

For more information, visit [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/distracted-driving/u-drive-u-text-u-pay](https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/distracted-driving/u-drive-u-text-u-pay).

1. Blincoe, L., Miller, T., Wang, J.-S., Swedler, D., Coughlin, T., Lawrence, B., Guo, F., Klauer, S., & Dingus, T. (2023, February). *The economic and societal impact of motor vehicle crashes, 2019 (Revised)* (Report No. DOT HS 813 403). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)