



## **Traffic Safety News**

*From the Delaware Office of Highway Safety*

### **Cell Phone in One Hand, Ticket in the Other**

Did you know that motorists who use hand-held devices while driving are 4 times more likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves? It has become a common occurrence to see others talking on their hand-held cell phone or checking their smartphone while driving. You may even do it yourself. But there is more to Distracted Driving than just talking on a cell phone and texting.

#### **What you need to know**

Distraction occurs any time you take your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, and your mind off the task of driving. Any non-driving activity you engage in while behind the wheel is a potential distraction and increases your risk of crashing. Driving while using a cell phone is particularly dangerous. Consider this:

- Cell phone related crashes trend young in Delaware. 54% of these crashes are caused by a person under the age of 30.
- Of people under 30, males account for 60% of crashes and females 40%.
- Of those aged 19 and under, 56% of those responsible were male and 44% were female.
- 61% of cell phone related crashes have occurred in New Castle County. 23% have occurred in Sussex County, and 15% have occurred in Kent County.
- Friday trends much higher than other days for cell phone related crashes with the next highest days being Wednesday and Thursday.
- Cell phone crash rates increase around lunch time, as well as between 1:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. when bars close.

#### **What you can do**

OHS and Delaware law enforcement are teaming up to stop distracted drivers by collaborating on a one day cell phone enforcement blitz on February 18. In 2013, nearly 19,610 citations were written for violating the state's hands free cell phone law.

- The law bans texting while driving, as well as bans the use of hand-held cell phones and the use of other mobile devices while driving.
- Drivers are required to use hands-free technology in order to use a cell phone while driving.

Since the average fine is over \$100, it is best to turn off the phone and put it away until you have reached your destination. If you need to make a call, pull off to a safe location.

And remember, if you have a cell phone in one hand, you may have a ticket in the other.

For more information about Delaware's cell phone law, see [www.ohs.delaware.gov/cellphone](http://www.ohs.delaware.gov/cellphone). You can also find more information about distracted driving at [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov).

**Drive Safe. Arrive Alive DE.**

This message is brought to you by the Office of Highway Safety, who asks you to drive safely at all times. For more information on this and other traffic safety programs, go to [www.ohs.delaware.gov](http://www.ohs.delaware.gov).