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Text & Drive or Safely Arrive

According to “DWI: Driving While Intexticated,” it takes approximately 5 seconds to send one text. That means at 55 miles per hour, you will be traveling down the road without looking for about 100 yards. That’s the length of a football field. Some will argue that this doesn’t matter, 77% of young drivers claim they are safe when they text and drive. By taking a look at the statistics and studies that have been found, it is clear that the laws passed on texting and driving are for the safety of drivers.

You may think that sending a short text message such as “Okay” or “See you in a bit” is no big deal, lots of people do it right? Well did you know that sending that little text message makes it 23 times more likely that you will crash? “DWI: Driving While Intexticated” says that is the reason that 23% of all auto collisions, or 1.3 million crashes a year, have the use of a cell phone involved. “Distracted Driving,” an article by CDC, states that these crashes involve 9 deaths and more than 1,060 injuries per day. Some try to say that by holding their phone closer to the windshield it’s safe because they can see the road and the phone, or they only text at stop signs or red lights. Others argue that it is safer for them to text and drive than it is for people to drive while intoxicated. None of these have been proven true. In fact, the “Statistics on Don’t Text & Drive, Let’s Save Some Lives” have shown that texting is 6 times more likely to cause a crash than being intoxicated. It is clear that texting while driving, no matter how “safe” you may think you are, is in fact not safe. These statistics prove their point but there have also been studies done on texting while driving that have found some interesting results as well.

If the statistics given above don’t convince you, here are some studies that have found texting while driving is unsafe firsthand. Studies have shown that texting has the longest eyes-off-the-road time of all activities that distract drivers. According to “Texting to Death,” an article found in the New York Times, a study done at the University of Utah found that a teen driver using a cell phone has the same reaction time as a 70-old-driver not using a cell phone. This means that you are slowing your reaction time down by a lot. Another study put on by the researchers at Virginia Tech Transportation Institute involved installing cameras, GPS, lane trackers, gadgets to measure speed and acceleration, and other sensors in cars of young teen drivers as well as some adults. While it can’t prove that talking on the phone is dangerous, an article covered by CBS News showed that dialing and texting are the most distracting activities on a phone. Nearly all studies and statistics show that texting while driving is unsafe. So, what are we doing to drive people away from these bad habits?

To help enforce safe driving many states have started to place laws in action to ban cellphones while driving. The Governors Highway Safety Association stated that twelve states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have banned the use of cellphones while driving from drivers of all ages. In 2007, states started to pass texting bans as well that are currently in place in 43 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Obviously, texting while driving is dangerous if they are putting laws in to effect to ban it.

Not using a cell phone at all while driving is the safest choice. It has clearly been proven through the statistics, different studies, and laws put in to effect that texting while driving is distracting and not safe for the drivers or anyone else on the road. You can either be part of the 23% of auto collisions caused by cell phones or you can text after you arrive safely, you choose.

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