

Tool Box Talk

Distracted Driving

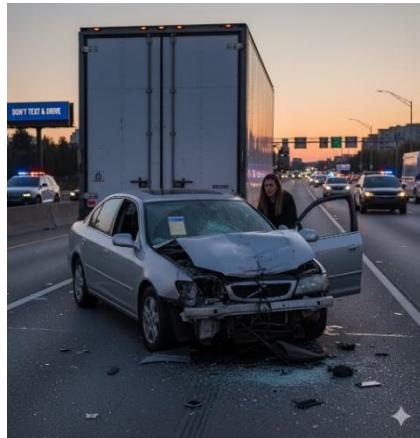
There are many hazards present while driving that become even more dangerous when a driver is distracted, causing them not to drive defensively.

According to SGI, driver inattention or distraction is one of the leading causes of collisions.

Tips to Remove Distractions

Here are some guidelines to keep you and others safe on the road:

- Before starting to drive, put your cell phone on silent, turn it off completely, or put it in your glove compartment to resist the temptation to use it while driving.
- If you need to use your phone urgently, completely pull off the road and park your car safely before making a call or sending a text message.
- If you're unsure of how to reach your destination, plan your route or have someone with you in the car to read you the directions.
- Pre-set your radio stations or create your playlist before you leave the house. Ensure the volume doesn't impede your ability to hear traffic, including vehicle horns and emergency vehicles.
- If you can't eat before you leave, park the car safely or take some time to dine in to avoid eating while driving.
- If you are going to be drinking alcohol, plan ahead for a safe ride home.



Myth (M) or Truth (T)

1. Drivers using hand-held devices are four times more likely to get into a collision serious enough to cause injury than drivers who are focused on the road.
2. Reading maps or other material while driving is considered a driver distraction.
3. You should wait until you are fully stopped at a red light to use your cell phone to avoid receiving a ticket.
4. When drivers use a hands-free phone, they are more aware of the traffic around them and react more quickly to danger.
5. Drivers talking on cellphones are, in many cases, just as impaired as drunk drivers.
6. Experienced drivers are better at handling cellphone distraction than novice drivers.
7. It is okay to use your cellphone while driving as long as it does not take your focus off the road.
8. Driver distraction is a factor in 8 out of 10 (about 4 million) car crashes in North America each year.
9. Wearing a seatbelt can decrease your chances of being killed or seriously injured in a collision by as much as 50%.
10. Alcohol, distracted driving and speed account for 41.6% of fatal collisions in Saskatchewan.
11. In Saskatchewan, on average, there were 3480 collisions per year (2019-2023) attributed to driver distraction. These collisions resulted in 15 fatalities and 754 injuries.
12. The penalty for using a cellphone while driving is \$580 for the first offence and 4 demerit points under the Safe Driver Recognition and the Driver Improvement Program.

Two laws in Saskatchewan address distracted driving:

- cellphone legislation
- driving without due care legislation

For more information:

<https://sgi.sk.ca/distraction>

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ANSWERS: