



A Campaign on Safer Driving With Information

Teach Your Employees This Golden Rule: Drive Now, Call Later

If hands-free cell phone use while driving is not risk free, then you're wondering, why is it OK to carry on a conversation with a passenger?

In cases involving adult drivers, the answer is three-fold:

- A passenger provides another set of eyes
- A passenger is able to spot and point out driving hazards
- A passenger is able to recognize when traffic is challenging and stop talking

The National Safety Council has reviewed more than 30 studies that show [hands-free systems fail to make driving safer](#). Even with both hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road, your brain is distracted from the task of driving by conversation or infotainment. And your brain is capable of doing only so much.

At NSC, multi-tasking is described as a big, fat myth. While the brain quickly toggles between tasks, research proves it cannot do two things at the same time. The activity in the area of the brain that processes moving images decreases by up to 1/3 when listening to talking on the phone. The result: distracted driving.

In a NSC poll, 80% of respondents said they believe hands-free cell phones are safer than using handheld devices. And 53% said they believe hands-free systems must be safe if they are built into vehicles. Studies conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety and the Texas A&M Transportation Institute debunk these beliefs, three conclusions serving to drive home the point:

- [Hands-free features in dashboards actually increase mental distraction](#)
- Using voice-to-text is more distracting than typing texts while driving
- Drivers who text with their hands or voice (using speech-to-text systems) keep their eyes on the road less often and have reaction times twice as slow

About 100 people die in car crashes every day, making motor vehicle incidents the #1 cause of unintentional deaths in the United States. About 26% percent of all car crashes involve cell phone use. At any moment, 9% of drivers are talking on cell phones.

In 2014, there were [100,825 traffic crashes in Texas that involved distracted driving](#) (distraction, driver inattention or cell phone use), according to the Texas Department of Transportation. That represented a 6% increase from 2013.



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TxDOT reported that there were 3,214 serious injuries from distracted driving incidents in 2014 and 468 deaths. Nearly one in five crashes in Texas involved driver distraction.