

Vehicle Safety

Hand-Held Devices and Driving

A Hazardous Mix

Using a hand-held device while driving increases your risk for collisions!

Drivers are four times more likely to crash when using a cell phone or handheld device. Of all cell phone-related activities, dialing and texting have the highest degree of risk. Ontario's new law prohibits the use of hand held devices. Drivers who text, type, email, dial or chat using any hand-held device will face fines up to \$500 upon conviction.



Police can also charge drivers with careless driving or even dangerous driving (a criminal offence) if they do not pay full attention to their driving. If convicted of careless driving, a driver will automatically receive six demerit points, fines up to \$1000 and/or a jail term of six months. In some cases, the license may be suspended for up to two years. This is one of Ontario's toughest rules of the road!

Tips to help reduce driver distraction:

- Use a hands-free device.
- Plan for safe locations to stop (examples are rest stops or commuter lots) to make and receive calls.
- Before you start driving, turn off your cell phone.
- Allow calls to go to voice mail or allow a passenger to make and receive calls.
- Consider recording an outgoing voice message that lets callers know you are on the road.

In Emergencies:

- All drivers may use hand-held devices to call 9-1-1.
- Pull over safely if conditions allow.
- Keep emergency calls as brief as possible.
- Alert the caller that you are on the road.
- End conversations immediately if driving conditions or situations become hazardous (examples are: inclement weather, roadway construction, high-speed or high volume traffic).

Police, paramedics and firefighters will continue to be allowed to use hand-held devices when performing their duties.

Jim Bradley, Minister of Transportation states, "It is not safe to be texting, e-mailing or dialing a phone when you are driving a vehicle. Now it is also illegal." (2009).

Visit: www.mto.gov.ca

Source: Ministry of Transportation (2009)

If you have any questions please e-mail: population.health@porcupinehu.on.ca