

# >> TOOLBOX TALK – Distracted Driving

While cell phone use when behind the wheel is one of the common forms of distracted driving, it is far from the only one.

## Distractions

We would usually put distracted driving into one of three categories:

1. **Visual or audible distractions** are things that can take your eyes or attention off the road (i.e. looking at GPS, checking kids in rear view mirror etc., conversations etc.);
2. **Manual distractions** are things that cause you to take your hands off the wheel or your feet off the pedals ( i.e. searching in bag/glove box, eating/drinking, grooming etc.); and
3. **Cognitive distractions** are things that you are thinking about or feeling that cause you to take your mind off the task of driving (i.e. fatigue, personal issues etc. ).

## How Bad Is It?

In 2010 the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (U.S.) found that 80% of collisions and 65% of near crashes have some form of driver inattention as contributing factors.

And in 2014, the RCMP reported that driver distraction is a factor in about 4 million motor vehicle crashes in North America each year. That's 11,000 each and every day!

## What the Law Says

All 10 provinces in Canada now have some form of cell phone/distracted driving legislation in place. The Highway Traffic Act in Newfoundland and Labrador has penalties for:

- Driving without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other persons. Fines ranging from \$300 - \$1000.
- Driving without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other persons causing bodily harm or death. Minimum fine of \$2000 and a maximum fine of \$20,000 or up to two years imprisonment, or both; license suspension of not more than five years and 6 demerit points

- Using a hand held cellular phone while driving a motor vehicle. Fines from \$350-\$1000 and 4 demerit points.

But \$300 is nothing when you think of some of the other consequences.

## Controls

It may be impossible to eliminate all distractions while driving; however there are a lot of things that you can do to ensure that your attention stays on the task of driving.

### Pre-Trip:

- Make any adjustments to mirrors, temperature, seat etc. before driving
- Ensure that any loose objects are secured. These can cause a distraction while driving.
- Turn off your cell phone.
- Plan your route. If using a GPS, set it up before you leave.
- Ensure that you are well rested and in the right frame of mind to be behind the wheel.
- Give yourself ample time to get where you are going. If you will need to eat, give yourself enough time to stop along the way.

### While Driving:

- Do not use any hand held devices.
- Keep noise to a minimum. Noises, such as loud music, can be a distraction.
- Keep your eyes on the road ahead.
- Obey the rules of the road

## Discuss

Discuss company policies or rules regarding cell phone use and/or distracted driving.

The following video is geared towards young drivers, but let's not kids ourselves; it's not just young drivers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9swS1Vl6Ok>

**TOOLBOX MEETING FORM**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ No. in Crew: \_\_\_\_\_ No. Attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Last Meeting:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Names of Attendees (Signature Required)</b>
<b>Topics Discussed (policies, practices, procedures, hazard assessment):</b>	
<b>Suggestions Offered:</b>	
<b>Action(s) to be Taken:</b>	
<b>Injuries/Accidents Reviewed:</b>	

Supervisor's Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_