



GOALS

This safety session will teach trainees:

- How important concentration is for safe driving
- How many accidents are caused by distracted driving

Applicable Regulations: General Duty Clause Sec. 5(a) (1)



- 1. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that motor vehicle fatalities have declined in recent years.**
 - Modern cars have better safety features, including air bags, antilock brakes, and traction control.
 - Every year, more drivers and passengers are using seat belts.
 - Unfortunately, however, increased use of cell phones and other mobile devices has increased the number of accidents and deaths caused by distracted driving.
- 2. Distracted driving is any nondriving activity that takes the driver's attention from the primary task of operating the vehicle and increases the risk of crashing. There are three main types of distraction:**
 - Visual—taking your eyes off the road
 - Manual—taking your hands off the wheel
 - Cognitive—taking your mind off your driving
- 3. Common activities that can distract a driver include:**
 - Using a mobile device
 - Texting
 - Eating and drinking
 - Talking to passengers
 - Grooming
 - Reading, including map reading
 - Using a Global Positioning System (GPS) or navigation system
 - Watching a video
 - Manipulating vehicle entertainment system controls
- 4. Using a cell phone while driving delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent.**
 - This is true, whether it's a handheld or hands-free device, according to a University of Utah study.
 - Carnegie Mellon reports that driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent.
 - Talking with another passenger can also be distracting, but a passenger may warn the driver if there suddenly is a dangerous situation on the road.
 - A passenger may also have enough sense to stop talking if traffic becomes very heavy—but the caller on the other end of a cell phone conversation has no idea about road conditions or sudden danger.



Safety Trainer **The Dangers of Distracted Driving**

5. **The NHTSA estimates that nearly half a million people are injured and more than 3,000 die annually in crashes involving a distracted driver.**
 - The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that drivers who use handheld devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves.
 - Younger, inexperienced drivers under 20 years old have the highest proportion of distraction-related fatal crashes, but drivers of all ages create a hazard when they try to do two things at once.
6. **Most dangerous of all is texting because it involves all three types of distraction—visual, manual, and cognitive.**
 - Research shows that drivers who send and receive text messages take their eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds out of every 6 seconds while texting.
 - At 55 miles per hour, this means that the driver is traveling the length of a football field, including the end zones, without looking at the road.
 - Drivers who text are more than 20 times more likely to get into an accident than nondistracted drivers. That’s scary!
7. **Always avoid distracted driving by following these safety practices.**
 - Make only emergency cell phone calls while actually driving if permitted by state law.
 - Have a hands-free phone and speed dialing or voice activation in case you have to make an emergency call while under way.
 - For texting or routine cell phone calls, pull off the road or over to the shoulder.
 - Think, Do I really need to speak to someone right this very minute?



DISCUSSION POINTS:

Have any of you had an accident or close call caused because you or another driver was using a cell phone or texting? Have you made any changes to your own driving habits because of a frightening experience or something you witnessed?



CONCLUSION:

Cell phones and other mobile devices can be wonderful tools in case of emergency—but they can also be the instruments of deadly accidents. Use them carefully to protect yourself and your family.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take The Dangers of Distracted Driving quiz to see if they understand how many accidents and fatalities are caused by distracted drivers or whether they need to review this important subject again soon.