



# Distracted Driving

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), driver inattention is the leading factor in most crashes and near-crashes nationwide. Nearly 80% of crashes and 65% of near-crashes involve some form of inattention within three seconds before the event. In Kentucky from 2005 to 2007, there were 176,225 crashes resulting in 53,900 injuries and 715 fatalities.

## What Causes Driver Distraction?

- ▶ Reaching for a moving or stationary object
- ▶ Looking at an external object
- ▶ Using music controls
- ▶ Talking or listening to passengers
- ▶ Reading and/or writing
- ▶ Eating and drinking
- ▶ Grooming
- ▶ Smoking
- ▶ Use of electronic devices such as a cell phone, iPod or Mp3 Player, personal digital assistant (PDA), laptop, mobile fax machines, and on-board navigation systems.



## Cell Phones

A common distraction for drivers is the use of cell phones. However, the number of crashes and near-crashes due to dialing is nearly identical to the number associated with talking or listening. What's the reason? Dialing is more dangerous but occurs less often than talking or listening.

### Consider the alternatives:

- ▶ Pull off the roadway if it is safe and legal to do so.
- ▶ Ask a passenger to handle the calls.
- ▶ Allow voice mail to answer and return calls when it is more safe and convenient.

### If you use your cell phone while driving, use good judgment:

- ▶ Be aware that your full attention will not be on what it should be—driving.
- ▶ Tell the caller you are driving and may have to end the conversation.
- ▶ Position your phone within easy reach.
- ▶ Use memory dial and automatic redial features.
- ▶ Dial numbers while you are not moving.
- ▶ Do not engage in stressful or emotional conversations while driving.
- ▶ Do not use data functions such as text messaging or web browsing while driving.

### Did You Know?



Using a cell phone while driving increases your chance of a crash by 400%. A hands-free device may help in decreasing driver distraction. However, be aware that headsets or earbuds reduce your ability to hear traffic noises by 50%.

# Children



- ▶ Always properly restrain children in the back seat.
- ▶ Make sure the harness straps are snug and insist your child remain in the seat.
- ▶ Stop the car in a safe place if your child gets out of the car seat or seat belt and refuse to move until the child obeys. Be calm but firm, and praise the child when he/she rides quietly and stays restrained.
- ▶ If your child continues to remove the harness straps, you may need to try a vest that closes in the back. Contact E-Z-ON Products at 800-323-6598 or visit [www.ezonpro.com](http://www.ezonpro.com).
- ▶ Bring something for everyone to do, such as soft toys or books.
- ▶ Play children's music or stories on tape.
- ▶ Stop often for children to run around and stretch.

## Did You Know?



According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, kids are four times more distracting than adults as passengers, and infants are eight times more distracting.

# Pets

- ▶ Never drive with your animal seated in your lap or roaming freely.
- ▶ Gate, cage, or secure your pet with a harness system.
- ▶ Give your pet a toy or bone to keep it busy.
- ▶ Keep the temperature in the car comfortable.
- ▶ Make frequent stops on long trips for bathroom breaks and stretching.



# Eating, Drinking And Grooming

It is certainly convenient, but there is no safe way to eat, drink, or groom in the car. If you must eat while driving, try to avoid messy foods and stick to easily handled finger foods. If your makeup or hair needs to be checked, do so at a stoplight.

# Drive Carefully—It's The Law!



## KRS 189.290 states:

(1) The operator of any vehicle upon a highway shall operate the vehicle in a careful manner, with regard for the safety and convenience of pedestrians and other vehicles upon the highway.

(2) No person shall willfully operate any vehicle on any highway in such a manner as to injure the highway.

## For Additional Information:

- AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety: [www.aaafoundation.org](http://www.aaafoundation.org)
- American Institute for Public Safety: [www.aipsnews.com](http://www.aipsnews.com)
- National Safety Council: [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)
- The USAA Educational Foundation: [www.usaaedfoundation.org](http://www.usaaedfoundation.org)