



TOOLBOX TALK: Cell Phones & Driving

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We've all heard the statistics; cell phones used while driving are a major distraction. There are countless studies proving this argument, so let's put our focus beyond the studies that have been performed. Let's talk about our own personal experiences!

Have you ever seen any of the following occurrences?

- Being passed while traveling on the highway only to have this same car slow down in front of you. You go around them, you look over and they are holding their phone with one hand and driving with the other, moments later they pass you and guess what? They are still on the phone! Their mind is on the conversation at hand, not the business of driving and the surrounding environment on the road. A danger to themselves, you and others.
- Texting while driving! Whether texting at a red light or driving down the road this is a dangerous behavior not only to themselves but also the other motorist on the road! I personally have seen people set through a green light not realizing the light has changed because they were texting. I've personally seen cars run off onto the shoulder of the road or weave from side to side in their lane, only to recover control of their vehicle in the nick of time. Why? They were texting or accessing other functions of their phone while driving.

- We've all had cars following too closely behind only to look in the rearview mirror and discover they are using their phone. You see them looking up and down every few moments at their phone. What are they doing?? They are doing something none of us should be doing: driving while texting, surfing the internet, reading emails, looking up phone numbers, etc. If you have to stop abruptly or even just slow down for traffic ahead, the person behind you is already not paying attention to driving and comes too close to your rear bumper before they react to the conditions around them. You can usually see the panic on their face when they realize they are about to hit your car in the rear. I've personally found a safe place to pull over just to get them out from behind me!

This was only three examples how taking your attention away from driving can be dangerous. I bet you can add to this list with your own personal experiences.

Don't use your phone while driving even to hold a conversation unless you can do so utilizing a hands free device. Many automobiles sync with phones today so the driver can continue to drive without having to pick up their phone to answer or place a call. Many state laws allow for hand free devices to be used. Even then, the mind is on the conversation, not totally on driving...pay attention!

There are many other distractions we didn't talk about that can take your mind away from driving other than cell phones.

Keep one thing in mind, on many of our highways the only thing separating you from another vehicle headed toward you is a painted line on the road. The whole concept of having another vehicle coming towards you and staying on their side of that painted line on the road depends on both drivers paying attention to what they are doing, 100% of the time!

Drive Responsibly! Be part of the solution, not the problem!