

# Cell Phone Use

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It is estimated that approximately 25% of the 6 million motor vehicle accidents each year are caused by distracted drivers. Investigations of these accidents have found that many involve distraction of the driver while using a cell phone. Drivers talking on a cell phone can become so deeply involved in the conversation that drivers ignore their responsibility as a driver, creating dangerous highway situations. For this reason, the Division of Air Quality has adopted a rule that prohibits employees from using a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle. This applies to hand-held cell phones and hands-free cell phones.

Researchers have found that tasks involved in the use of a cell phone leads to an increase in the time a driver responds to changing highway conditions. These response times were dramatically slower than when listening to the radio or other recorded media. Researchers found no significant difference to response times whether a hand-held or hands-free phone was being used.

To safely use a cell phone when operating a motor vehicle, drivers should pull off the road in a safe area and stop the vehicle to conduct a conversation on a cell phone. Passengers of motor vehicles may use a cell phone as long as the driver is not distracted.

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