

# Shun Those Cell Phones While Driving

More than 20 percent of injury crashes in the United States involve reports of distracted driving, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Of those killed in distracted-driving related accidents, 18 percent involved the usage of a cell phone. **Another study indicates that using a cell phone while driving, whether it is a hand-held or hands-free device, delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent.**



Cell phones, and particularly smart phones, are considered one of the leading driver distractions. As a result, more and more communities are placing restrictions on drivers' use of cell phones. The following tips are offered to motorists with regard to cell phone use in vehicles.

- You should wait until the car trip is complete before placing a call. Your cell phone's voicemail feature should answer a call while you are driving.
- Absolutely essential calls should only be performed while stopped. However, it is not wise to pull over on the side of the road where a rear-end collision is possible. Instead, you should pull into a parking lot to perform this task.
- The phone should be placed where it is easy to see and reach.
- You should take advantage of speed-dialing capabilities.
- You should never drive and talk on the cell phone during stressful, emotional, or complex discussions since the risk of an accident is heightened.
- You should consider using a hands-free cellular phone since some studies indicated that these are safer to use.
- You should never text message while driving.

[International Risk Management Institute, Inc., October 2011](#)