

RESOLUTION 11-R77

COUNCIL ITEM 11H
DATE 10/17/11

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ADOPTION OF A BAN ON TEXTING WHILE DRIVING; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, according the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, drivers who use handheld devices while driving are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves or others; and

WHEREAS, those who engage in dangerous highway safety behaviors, such as texting while driving, fear getting a ticket and fine significantly more than they do being injured or killed in a motor vehicle crash; and

WHEREAS, the act of composing, sending or reading text messages interrupts drivers' cognitive attention, causes vision to be directed away the road, and compromises manual control of the vehicle; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Port St. Lucie, in order to promote highway safety and reduce injuries or death resulting from dangerous highway safety behaviors, hereby expresses its support for the adoption by the State of Florida of a statewide "ban on texting while driving law."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City Council of the City of Port St. Lucie hereby supports the adoption by the State of Florida of a "ban of texting while driving law." Such a ban would make it unlawful to manually type or enter multiple letters, numbers, symbols or other text in a wireless communication device, or send or read data in the device, for the purpose of non-voice interpersonal communication, including texting, e-mailing and instant messaging, while operating a motor vehicle in the travel portion of public streets, roads and highways.

Section 2. The City Clerk is directed to forward a copy of this resolution, upon adoption, to the St. Lucie County, Florida, legislative delegation, the Mayor and City Commission of the City of Fort Pierce, and members of the Board of County Commissioners for St. Lucie County.

Section 3. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

RESOLUTION 11-R77

PASSED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Port St. Lucie,
Florida, this 17th day of October, 2011.

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF PORT ST. LUCIE

ATTEST:

By: _____
JoAnn M. Faiella, Mayor

Karen A. Phillips, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM: _____
Roger G. Orr, City Attorney

MEMORANDUM

TO: JERRY A. BENTROTT, CITY MANAGER

FROM: JOANN M. FAIELLA, MAYOR 

DATE: OCTOBER 12, 2011

SUBJECT: AGENDA REQUEST

Please place on the Monday, October 17 Council meeting a discussion regarding the attached resolution to adopt the support of the Ban on Texting While Driving Law.



JMF/brc

RECEIVED

OCT 12 2011

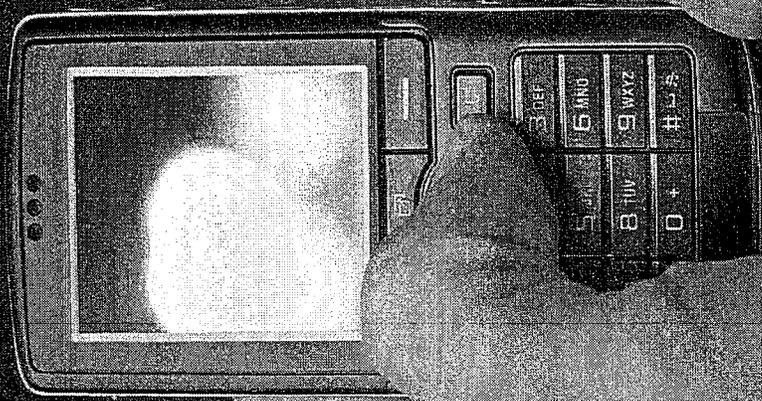
City Manager's Office

COMBAT DISTRACTED DRIVING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

16% OF
ALL FATAL
CRASHES IN
2008 WERE
CAUSED BY
DISTRACTED
DRIVERS.

put  down

www.distraction.gov



LEARN THE FACTS

21% OF CRASHES THAT INVOLVE INJURY ARE ATTRIBUTABLE TO DISTRACTED DRIVING.

18% OF DRIVER-CAUSED CRASHES WERE DUE TO DISTRACTED DRIVING.

Like the campaign against drunk driving, efforts to combat distracted driving are aimed at preventing accidents and saving lives.

What is distracted driving?

Distractive driving is any non-driving activity a person engages in that has the potential to distract him or her from the primary task of driving and increase 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 what you are doing.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Talking and texting on the phone while driving are especially dangerous because they may involve more than one kind of distraction.

DRIVERS UNDER THE AGE OF 20 ARE MOST LIKELY TO DRIVE DISTRACTED, AND 16% OF ALL FATAL CRASHES INVOLVING DRIVERS UNDER 20 ARE ATTRIBUTABLE TO DISTRACTED DRIVING.

GET INVOLVED

Find out what the distracted driving law is in your State. If your State does not have a cell phone or texting ban, or has limited or a weak distracted driving law, become a champion for legislation.

Strengthen the efforts to eliminate distracted driving by adding your voice and experience to the Community.

Call or write your State legislators and let them know you support distracted driving laws.

OVER 22% OF ALL CRASHES WERE DUE TO DRIVER INVOLVEMENT IN SECONDARY TASKS.



Actions That Make a Difference

High Visibility Enforcement

High visibility enforcement means using stepped up enforcement, such as safety checkpoints or other enforcement strategies, in coordination with an earned media and/or paid media campaign supporting the enforcement effort. When people in the community understand that law enforcement is serious about enforcing laws like texting and hand-held cell phone bans—and actually witness officers enforcing those laws—they are more likely to “Put It Down” and pay attention to the road. As demonstrated in similar campaigns, like “Click It or Ticket” that have been extremely successful in increasing the national seat belt use rate, those who engage in these dangerous highway safety behaviors fear getting a ticket and a fine significantly more than they do being injured or killed in a motor vehicle crash.

Members of the “Put It Down” campaign can help law enforcement in their efforts to develop enforcement programs that are both effective and visible. It might mean assisting them with safety checkpoints, promoting enforcement activities, or donating merchandise or coupons that law enforcement officers could distribute to drivers who have chosen to put their phones down.

In those states and communities that have implemented high visibility enforcement programs for

similar campaigns, like “Click It or Ticket,” there have been great successes. By implementing new high visibility enforcement programs across the country, and calling on all “Put It Down” partners to support law enforcement, drivers will get the message loud and clear that distracted driving makes them not only a danger to themselves, but everyone else on the road around them.

YOU CAN ASSIST LAW ENFORCEMENT

- “Put It Down” partners can publicly support enforcement efforts and educate their constituencies on the importance of paying attention to the road instead of anything else that will divert their attention from the task at hand... driving.
- Organizations can write letters to their political leaders and to newspapers, in support of stepped-up enforcement efforts.
- Businesses can provide rewards and incentives to law enforcement, like discount coupons, to distribute to people who are paying attention to the road and not their phones.
- Recognize your law enforcement agency's efforts to help protect citizens by enforcing distracted driving laws.





Actions That Make A Difference

Public Education

For the public to endorse "Put It Down," it needs to understand the dangers and potential deadly consequences of distracted driving. One of the best ways to provide that information is through public education. To effectively educate people means using all the tools at the campaign's disposal—company newsletters, special events, media outreach and even one-on-one contacts between individuals. It's letting people know that when they decide to drive while distracted, they are not only a danger to themselves, but to everyone on the road around them.

Creating an Environment for Change

Public education can do more than just inform people of the dangers of distracted driving, it can also create an environment for change. By focusing on messages that work, public education can build increased understanding and support for local "Put It Down" partnerships and enforcement efforts.

It's this dynamic combination of increased enforcement and public education that has proven effective in changing behavior. While public education may alter the attitudes of people who won't "Put It Down," it may not be enough to change their actions. When you combine public education with increased enforcement of laws prohibiting texting and talking on hand-held devices, people begin to get the message that this unsafe behavior will not be tolerated.

Messages That Move the Public: It's Time to "Put It Down"

When drivers engage in distracted driving behaviors, they are not only a danger to themselves, but to everyone else on the road around them.

Drivers Simply Can't Do Two Things At Once.

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, drivers who use hand-held devices while driving are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves or others.

Deadly Behavior. In 2008 alone, nearly 6,000 people died and more than half-a-million injuries occurred simply because people were not paying attention to the road. People's conversations can wait. The chances of causing a crash that could ruin lives is just too great.

Young Drivers Are Especially At Risk. Young drivers are at risk of distracted driving—especially men and women under 20 years of age. Their lack of driving experience can contribute to critical misjudgments if they become distracted. Not surprisingly, they text more than any other age group and the numbers of young drivers who text are only increasing.

Everyone Has a Role. We all have a stake in solving this problem, and we can all be a part of the solution. We must put our phones down; be a good example to our children, peers, and community; and insist that when riding with others they do the same.

Set the Example and Educate

- Join the "Put It Down" partnership in your community.
- Simply "Put It Down." Don't engage in distracted behaviors while driving.
- Ask friends, family and co-workers to put their phones down while driving.
- Prohibit driving-age teenagers from talking on a cell phone or texting while driving.
- Work with advocacy groups that work to ban hand-held cell phone use and texting.

February 2010

SAMPLE LAW TO PROHIBIT TEXTING WHILE DRIVING

The purpose of this sample legislation is to provide a framework for state legislatures to use to prohibit texting while driving. While there are many sources of driver distraction, there is heightened concern regarding the risks of texting-while-driving. The act of composing, sending or reading text messages interrupts drivers' cognitive attention, causes vision to be directed away from the road, and compromises manual control of the vehicle.

While evidence is accumulating on the effects of other sources of driver distraction, a number of states have enacted laws addressing cell phone use and/or texting while driving. Although laws alone will not fully resolve the problem, this sample language is offered as an important step in addressing the growing concern about driver distraction. In 2009, more than 135 billion text messages were sent or received in a one-month period in the U.S., an 80 percent increase over the rate in 2008.

The U.S. Department of Transportation held a Distracted Driving Summit on September 30 - October 1, 2009 in Washington, D.C. to examine the full spectrum of distracted driving across transportation modes: passenger vehicles, large trucks, trains and transit. More than 250 leading traffic safety experts, safety advocates and government officials gathered to define the problem and discuss how best to address it. The summit generated broad agreement among public and private sector organizations and policymakers about the need for texting-while-driving laws. Public surveys also confirm widespread community support for texting bans.

In further recognition of the serious risk posed by texting-while-driving and to demonstrate Federal leadership, President Obama issued an Executive Order on October 1, 2009.¹ The Order prohibits Federal employees from texting while driving Government owned vehicles or privately owned vehicles while on official Government business or from texting-while-driving using wireless electronic devices supplied by the Government.

By the end of 2009, 19 states and the District of Columbia had enacted legislation banning texting-while-driving for all drivers, while a number of other states had laws covering specific types of drivers, such as novice drivers or school bus drivers. However, these laws vary in their design and scope. In 2009 alone, more than 200 driver distraction bills were considered and analysts expect that state legislatures will remain active in coming years as evidence accumulates and the call to take action on this issue becomes yet more urgent.

Texting laws are relatively new and have not been thoroughly evaluated. However, considering the rapid emergence of the problem and the growing evidence showing the threat to the safety of all road users, safety advocates and state legislatures are compelled to move forward, basing texting legislation on the broad foundation of principles learned from seat belt laws, impaired driving statutes and similar legislative initiatives, while more specific scientific evidence is gathered. This sample law reflects current circumstances and state of knowledge, but may be

¹ See www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/2009-obama.html and click on Executive Order 13513 for more information.

revised in the future to incorporate new research findings, address evolving technologies, or to harmonize with other legislation.

In addition to enacting a texting-while-driving law, states may consider other steps to address the issue, including enhanced public awareness and law enforcement programs and improved police crash reports that document specific distractions involved in crashes. Since the prevalence of texting is particularly high among teens, legislatures may also choose to include specific consequences under their graduated drivers licensing law for texting violations by novice drivers, such as delayed full licensure.

The following organizations participated in the development of this sample law: Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, AAA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CTIA- The Wireless Association, Governors Highway Safety Association, ITS America, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Safety Council, The National Traffic Law Center of the National District Attorneys Association, Safe Kids USA, and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The sample law – either in its entirety or in its individual provisions - does not necessarily reflect the positions of any of the individual participating organizations.

SAMPLE TEXTING WHILE DRIVING LAW

§ 1 Short title

This act may be cited as the [State] Ban on Texting While Driving Law

§ 2 Purpose

The purpose of this subchapter is to:

- (1) Improve roadway safety for all vehicle operators, passengers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and other road users;
- (2) Prevent crashes related to the act of text messaging while driving a motor vehicle;
- (3) Reduce injuries, death, property damage, health care costs, health insurance and automobile insurance rates related to motor vehicle crashes; and
- (4) Authorize law enforcement officers to stop vehicles and issue citations to persons texting while driving as a standard offense.

§ 3 Application

Except as provided in Section 4, this subchapter applies to all drivers during operation of a motor vehicle on the travel portion of public streets, roads and highways [Option: States may elect to cover only motor vehicles in motion]. This subchapter amends [insert state code] to make it unlawful to manually type or enter multiple letters, numbers, symbols or other text in a wireless communication device, or send or read data in the device, for the purpose of non-voice interpersonal communication, including texting, emailing and instant messaging.

§ 4 Exemptions

This subchapter does not apply to a driver who is:

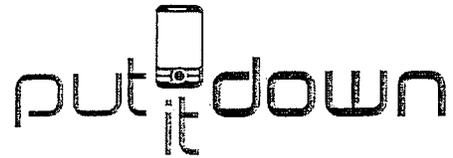
- (1) A law enforcement, fire service, or emergency medical services professional performing official duties.
- (2) Reporting an emergency, or criminal or suspicious activity to law enforcement authorities.
- (3) Receiving messages related to the operation or navigation of a motor vehicle; safety-related information including emergency, traffic, or weather alerts; data used primarily by the motor vehicle; or radio.
- (4) Using a device or system for navigation purposes.
- (5) Conducting wireless interpersonal communication that does not require manual entry of multiple letters, numbers, or symbols or reading text messages, except to activate, deactivate, or initiate a feature or function.

§ 5 Penalties

A driver violating this subchapter shall be subject to a penalty of:

- (1) For the 1st offense – traffic infraction or violation including a minimum fine of \$75 and action against driving privileges.
- (2) For a subsequent offense – penalties should escalate in accordance with the State's motor vehicle and traffic laws.
- (3) For any offense that results in a death or serious injury –the infraction should increase to a felony (criminal offense) with penalties consistent with State sentencing guidelines.

**SAMPLE LETTER
TO JOIN THE
DISTRACTED DRIVING CAMPAIGN**



[DATE]

**Name
Title
Organization
Address
City, State Zip code**

Dear **Mr./Ms. Name**,

How many times in the last week did you use your cell phone, eat a snack, change the radio station or do any other task while you were driving? For most of us, driving isn't our only focus when we're behind the wheel, and unfortunately these distractions are leading to fatalities that could otherwise be avoided.

In 2009, almost 5,500 people died in crashes involving a distracted driver, and nearly 450,000 more were injured according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). That's why NHTSA is focusing on ways to change the behavior of drivers through legislation, enforcement, public awareness and education—the same activities that have curbed drinking and driving and have increased seat belt use.

NHTSA's new campaign is simply called, "Put It Down." Its goal is to make drivers understand that any activity that takes their attention away from driving makes them not only a danger to themselves but everyone else around them, whether it be a hand-held cell phone, applying makeup, eating, etc.

There are four simple key messages that this National campaign has been designed around to inform drivers of the dangers of driving while distracted:

1. Drivers simply can't do two things at once
2. Everyone has a personal responsibility
3. Young drivers are especially at risk
4. Everyone is part of the solution

Together, we can make a difference in **[STATE]** by bringing together community and health groups, safety advocates, legislators and other elected officials, law enforcement, business and concerned citizens to address this issue. We are **[insert information here about the local campaign]**.

I would like to ask you to join us in this lifesaving effort as we ask **[STATE]** residents to "Put It Down" and concentrate on the road. **[Insert information here about what you would like them to do specifically—provide information to constituents, host events, write letters, act as a public partner, etc.]**

You can find more information about the campaign at www.distraction.gov.

I will follow up with you in the next few days to discuss this effort, and I hope you will join us in our efforts to get **[STATE]** to "Put It Down."

Sincerely,

**Name
Title
State**



SUPPORTING LEGISLATIVE
EFFORTS
SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]
CONTACT: [Name, Phone Number, E-mail address]

Note: Before filling in the names of the organization and organization spokesperson, you **MUST** contact them to obtain their permission to use their names in this press release. You must get their approval for the language of their quotations and any changes or additions they may require. Only after this is done can you send out the press release.

**[Name of Civic Group/Organization] Joins the
“Put It Down” Campaign
Announces Support for Laws That Ban Hand-held Cell Phone Use and Texting
to Save Lives And Make Roads Safer for Everyone**

[City, State] In an effort to make our roads safer and save lives, [Civic Group/Organization] announced today that they have joined the “Put It Down” campaign to stop distracted driving. [Group/Organization] has pledged their support to help spread the message that distracted drivers are not only a danger to themselves, but everyone else on the road around them. They also will encourage [State] legislators to **[(Or in the case where State has existing laws), strengthen existing laws to let residents know [State] means business.]** enact a law banning texting and hand-held cell phone use.

“We want to let people know we are serious about doing our part to stop this deadly behavior,” said **[Organization/Group Official, Title]**. “Too many people think that just being on a cell phone can’t and won’t contribute to causing a serious car crash, but these tragedies can and do happen all the time.”

In 2009 alone, nearly 5,500 people were killed and almost 450,000 people were injured in crashes involving a distracted driver nationwide. Additionally, in 2009, 20 percent of injury crashes involved reports of distracted driving.

While anything that takes your mind off the road or hands off the wheel is a hazard, there is heightened concern about the risks of texting while driving because texting combines three types of distraction – visual, taking the eyes off the road; manual, taking the hands off the wheel; and cognitive, taking the mind off the road.

“These sad statistics and facts reinforce the fact that strengthening and enforcing **[or passing a new law (if State does not currently have cell phone or texting laws)]** is a critical component to stopping distracted driving. It is time for **[STATE]** to join the group of states that have already taken action,” said **[Group Official]**.

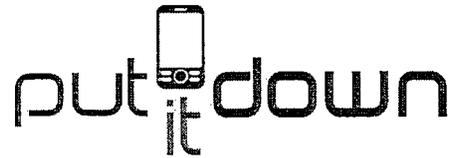
“We want to encourage the **[STATE]** Legislature to pass/strengthen **[INSERT TYPE OF LAW]** that will help keep our family, friends and communities safe.” **[Official said]**. “We cannot afford to allow this deadly behavior to continue.”

[Group Official] reminded everyone that there is strength in numbers, so please consider doing your part to make a difference...join the "Put It Down" campaign today!

For more information on the "Put It Down" campaign, to find out how you can get involved, or would like to know how to contact your local State Legislator, please visit [GROUP WEBSITE] or call [DESIGNATED PHONE NUMBER].

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COMMUNITY DISTRACTED DRIVING
SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS
SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]
CONTACT: [Name, Phone Number, E-mail address]

Note: Before filling in the names of the organization and organization spokesperson, you **MUST** contact them to obtain their permission to use their names in this press release. You must get their approval for the language of their quotations and any changes or additions they may require. Only after this is done can you send out the press release.

**COMMUNITY AND OR PARTNER(S) Joins the
“Put It Down” Campaign to
Educate Area Drivers About Distractions That Cost Lives**

[City, State] - With almost 5,500 lives lost and nearly 450,000 people injured from distracted drivers in 2009 alone, communities across the nation are joining the “Put It Down” campaign designed to educate drivers about the dangers of distracted driving. Today, **[COMMUNITY AND/OR PARTNERS]** announced **it/they has/have** joined this movement in an effort to save lives by encouraging people to concentrate on the road.

“We all know that talking on our cell phones while driving is distracting, but that doesn’t stop most people from continuing to do it,” said **[local spokesperson, title with organization]**. “This effort is intended to educate our community about the dangers of cell phone use, along with many other common distractions while driving. We hope that once people see the statistics and realize the real danger involved, they will change their driving habits to help protect themselves, their families and others on the road.”

When it comes to cell phones, new statistics show the real dangers of distracted driving. According to a study from Carnegie Mellon driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent, and a report from the National Safety Council reported that 28 percent of traffic crashes are caused by people talking on cell phones or sending text messages.

Texting is of heightened concern because it combines three types of distraction – visual, taking the eyes off the road; manual, taking the hands off the wheel; and cognitive, taking the mind off the road. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves.

While cell phones are a major focus of the distracted driving campaign, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and **[LOCAL ORGANIZATION]** are also encouraging people not to do any other task while driving.

“Distracted driving is any non-driving activity a person engages in that has the potential to distract him or her from the primary task of driving, which increases the risk of crashing,” said **[Spokesperson]**. “With more portable technology now than ever, driver distractions have risen to unprecedented numbers, but cell phones aren’t the only problem. Drivers can be distracted by eating and drinking, grooming, tuning the radio or even talking to passengers, and we want people to realize that anything that takes their attention from the road is a potential hazard.”

The national distracted driving effort focuses on ways to change the behavior of drivers through legislation, enforcement, public awareness and education—the same activities that have curbed drunk driving and increased seat belt use.

[COMMUNITY]'s campaign will [GIVE EXAMPLES HERE OF THE LOCAL CAMPAIGN AND WHAT IT WILL INCLUDE, AND INCLUDE ANY PARTNERS IN THE CAMPAIGN AND WHAT THEY WILL DO].

“Every driver in **[COMMUNITY]** has a role in this effort,” said **[Spokesperson]**. “However, we especially want to reach out to parents with teen drivers and younger drivers because we know that statistically, the under-20 age group had the highest proportion of distracted drivers involved in fatal crashes.”

[COMMUNITY]'s goal with this campaign is simple—save lives by getting driver's to “Put It Down” and concentrate on driving.

“Distracted driving is a major initiative that we are undertaking across the country, and one that we believe will make our roads significantly safer,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. “Decades of experience with drunk driving has taught us it takes a consistent combination of education, effective enforcement, a committed judiciary and collective efforts by local, state and national advocates to put a dent in the problem. Efforts like this one will help us put an end to distracted driving, and we encourage your support of this program to help save lives in your community.”

For more information about distracted driving, please visit www.distraction.gov, or you can contact **[LOCAL CONTACT at PHONE/EMAIL]**.

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[COMMUNITY] It's Time to "Put It Down"

Did you know that "distracted driving" was the 2009 word of the year according to Webster's Dictionary? Unfortunately, this is not just another fad that comes and goes. Distracted driving has become a trend with deadly, real consequences.

For anyone who thinks they can talk on their phone, text, apply make-up or do any other distracting activity while driving, it's time for a crash course in reality from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA):

- In 2009, almost 5,500 people died in crashes involving a distracted driver, and nearly 450,000 were injured. (NHTSA)
- Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)
- 20 percent of injury crashes in 2009 involved reports of distracted driving. (NHTSA)
- Younger, inexperienced drivers under 20 years old have the highest proportion of distraction-related fatal crashes. (NHTSA)

While those numbers may sound like just statistics, they represent the actual faces of mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, aunts, uncles and friends right here in [Community]. Just ask any law enforcement officer and they will tell you the sad tales of deaths and injuries that may have been prevented had everyone been paying attention to the road instead of someone or something else.

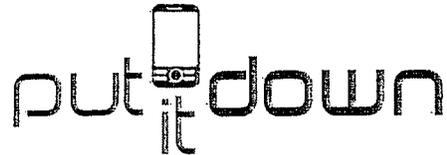
So, why do so many people participate in this dangerous behavior? With more technology now than ever, driver distractions have risen to unprecedented numbers. We live in a world where people expect instant, real-time information 24-hours-a-day and those desires do not stop just because they get behind the wheel. Drivers simply do not realize or seem to ignore the danger they create when they take their eyes off the road and their hands off the wheel, and focus on activities other than driving.

People often say, "I can do two things at once. I've memorized where the numbers are on my phone, so I don't have to look." Or, "It's just up to your ear...you have your sight, you're still watching the road." To the contrary, the people who choose to indulge in distracted driving behaviors are not only a danger to themselves, but to everyone on the road around them.

For those who think they can do two things at once, think about this...According to a study by Carnegie Mellon, driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent. Can you really afford to lose that much brainpower? Driving is an activity that requires your full-attention and focus in order to keep yourself and others safe.

Yes, this is a national problem, but it also affects us in our own community...and no one is immune. So, remember, "Put It Down"...your life is worth more than a conversation!

EMPLOYER MEMO TO
EMPLOYEES REGARDING
NEW DISTRACTED DRIVING POLICY



Memorandum

To: All [Company Name] Employees
From: [Company Official]
Date: [Date]
RE: New Policy Regarding Texting and Talking on Hand-Held Cell Phones

The issue of distracted driving has received a great deal of attention from the media lately, highlighting the severity and consequences of texting and talking on a hand-held cell phone while driving.

Did you know that according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2009, nearly 5,500 people died in crashes involving a distracted driver, and almost 450,000 others were injured? Additionally, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. Those numbers are alarming and as portable technologies increase, the numbers will only continue to go up as well.

As a member of the business community, members of [Local City/Region] look to us to be a strong community partner, take care of our employees and give back to the community. So, with the goal of your safety and the safety of everyone on the road, I would like to announce that beginning [XX Date] [Company Name] will no longer tolerate texting or talking on a hand-held phone while operating a company vehicle or while using a company issued cell phone while operating a personal vehicle.

We understand that there are calls that need to be made while on the road, but we are now asking if you have to make that call, please pull safely over to the side of the road to do so.

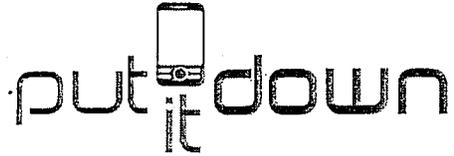
[Add Company consequences for failing to follow policy]

We strongly believe in doing our part to stop this deadly issue. We hope that by starting here in [Company Name], we will show the rest of the community we are serious about safety. It is our goal that if we lead through example, the practice of no texting or talking on hand-held cell phones while behind the wheel will spread to other businesses and throughout [Community].

So, I'm asking you to join with me and simply "Put It Down." No conversation is worth causing a serious crash, or worse...losing your life.

If you have any questions about this new policy please don't hesitate to come talk to me. Thanks for your cooperation and attention to this important matter!

**BUSINESS DISTRACTED DRIVING
POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT
SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]
CONTACT: [Name, Phone Number, E-mail address]

Note: Before filling in the names of the organization and organization spokesperson, you **MUST** contact them to obtain their permission to use their names in this press release. You must get their approval for the language of their quotations and any changes or additions they may require. Only after this is done can you send out the press release.

[Local Business] Doing Its Part To Stop Distracted Driving
*New Anti-Cell Phone and Texting While Driving Policy Major Step in Keeping
Community Safe*

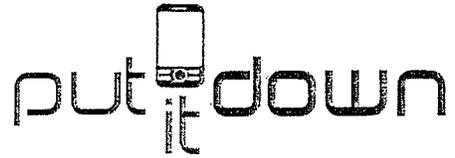
[City, State] – [Company Name] announced today, that, effective [XX Date], all employees are banned from texting or talking on a hand-held cell phone while behind the wheel of a company vehicle or while using a company issued phone in their personal vehicle.

“We have a responsibility to make sure every time one of our employees gets behind the wheel they put down their cell phones,” said [Company Official]. “Putting away our cell phones is a critical part in making sure that not only are our employees safe, but those traveling around them are safe as well. We are proud to be a strong community partner and hope that other businesses in this community will join us to help stop distracted driving.”

Distracted driving is a deadly problem that affects the entire nation and us right here in [XX Community], [Company Official] said. [She/He] explained that according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2009, almost 5,500 people died in crashes involving a distracted driver, and nearly 450,000 others were injured. Additionally, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves.

For more information on distracted driving, please visit, www.distraction.gov.

###



**[Company Name] Texting and Talking
on Hand-Held Cell Phones While Driving Policy**

Of increasing concern to [Company Name] are the dangers of distracted driving. Recent deadly crashes involving drivers distracted by talking and texting while driving highlight a growing danger on our roads. Numerous studies have demonstrated how the use of hand-held cell phones while driving pose a significant safety risk to motorists, their passengers and others on the road. In fact, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2008, nearly 6,000 people died in crashes involving a distracted driver.

Therefore, [Company Name] will no longer tolerate texting or talking on a hand-held phone while operating a company vehicle or while using a company issued cell phone while operating a personal vehicle. This includes, but is not limited to, answering or making phone calls, engaging in phone conversations, reading or responding to e-mails and text messages.

[Company Name] employees are required to:

- Turn cell phones off or put on silent or vibrate before starting the car.
- Pull over to a safe place if a call must be made or received while on the road.
- Consider modifying voice mail greeting to indicate that you are unavailable to answer calls or return messages while driving.
- Inform clients, associates and business partners of this policy as an explanation of why calls may not be returned immediately.

[Company Name] is concerned about the safety of its employees. It is our goal that if we lead by example, the practice of no texting or talking on hand-held cell phones while behind the wheel will spread throughout the community. Violations of this policy will lead to [Insert Company Consequences]

Below is a Statement of Acknowledgement that says you have read and fully understand [Company Name] policy. Please sign it and return it to your supervisor. If you have any questions regarding this policy please contact your supervisor.

I have received a written copy of the Council's Motor Vehicle Safety policy. I fully understand the terms of this policy and agree to abide by them.

Employee Signature

Date

Employee Name (printed)