



Cell Phone Fact Sheet

- Using cell phones while driving is a very high-risk behavior with significant impact on crashes and society. More than 50 peer-reviewed scientific studies have identified the risks associated with cell phone use while driving.
- Drivers who use cell phones are four times more likely to be involved in a crash. (1997 *New England Journal of Medicine* examination of hospital records and 2005 Insurance Institute for Highway Safety study linking crashes to cell phone records.)
- No difference exists in the cognitive distraction between hand held and hands-free devices. (Simulator studies at the Univ. of Utah.)
- Many businesses and organizations understand the risk and are already taking action. Among NSC members that responded to a 2009 survey, 58 percent (1,163 out of 2,004 respondents) said their organization had a cell phone policy of some kind. Of those, 70 percent said the policy did not affect productivity and 20 percent saw decreases in employee crash rates and property damage.
- Cell phone use contributes to an estimated 6 percent of all crashes, which equates to 636,000 crashes, 330,000 injuries, 12,000 serious injuries and 2,600 deaths each year. (Harvard Center of Risk Analysis.)
- 80 percent of crashes are related to driver inattention. Certain activities may be more dangerous than talking on a cell phone. However, cell phone use occurs more frequently and for longer durations than other, riskier behaviors. Thus, the No. 1 source of driver inattention is cell phones. (Virginia Tech 100-car study produced for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.)
- It is estimated that more than 100 million people use cell phones while driving. (CTIA – The Wireless Association reports more than 270 million cell phone subscribers. A Nationwide Insurance public opinion poll showed 81 percent of the public admitted to talking on a cell phone while driving.)
- The annual cost of crashes caused by cell phone use is estimated at \$43 billion. (Harvard Center for Risk Analysis.)
- Talking to a passenger while driving is significantly safer than talking on a cell phone. (University of Utah study.)