



www.themtsc.org

Maine Transportation

Safety Coalition

Working Together To Promote Safe Transportation In Maine

Volume 13

Number 52

November/December 2016

**MTSC Board of Directors
2015-2016**

Alan Vitcavage
Federal Motor Carrier Safety
Administration

Michelle Ward
Treasurer
Maine Department of Public
Safety

Duane Brunell
Maine Department of
Transportation

Brian Lawrence
Federal Highway Administration

Pat Moody
AAA New England

What Is Distracted Driving?



Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. All distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety. These types of distractions include:

- Texting
- Using a cell phone or smartphone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a navigation system
- Watching a video
- Adjusting a radio, CD player, or MP3 player

But, because text messaging requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the most alarming distraction.

The best way to end distracted driving is to educate all Americans about the danger it poses. On this page, you'll find facts and statistics that are powerfully persuasive. If you don't already think distracted driving is a safety problem, please take a moment to learn more. And, as with everything on [Distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov), please share these facts with others. Together, we can help save lives.

Key Facts and Statistics

In 2014, 3,179 people were killed, and 431,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers.

As of December 2014, 169.3 billion text messages were sent in the US (includes PR, the Territories, and Guam) every month. (CTIA)

Ten percent of all drivers 15 to 19 years old involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the crashes. This age group has the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted at the time of the crashes. (NHTSA)

Drivers in their 20s are 23 percent of drivers in all fatal crashes, but are 27 percent of the distracted drivers and 38 percent of the distracted drivers who were using cell phones in fatal crashes. (NHTSA)

The percentage of drivers text-messaging or visibly manipulating handheld devices increased from 1.7 percent in 2013 to 2.2 percent in 2014. Since 2007, young drivers (age 16 to 24) have been observed manipulating electronic devices at higher rates than older drivers. (NHTSA)

At any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010. (NOPUS)

A 2015 Erie Insurance distracted driving survey reported that drivers do all sorts of dangerous things behind the wheel including

WEAR SAFETY BELTS



Message from the Executive Board

Greetings from the MTSC Executive Team and welcome to the November/December MTSC newsletter.



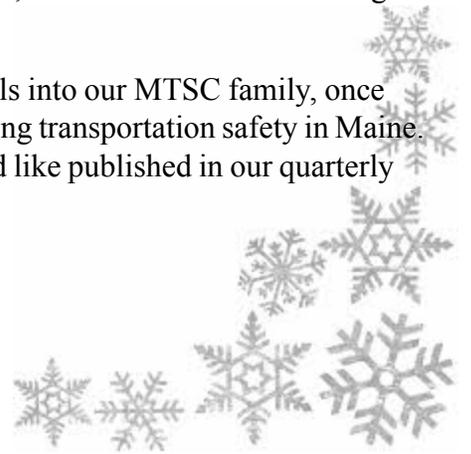
We hope that everyone enjoyed all that autumn in Maine has to offer and had a fantastic Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends. Being able to participate and appreciate the many outdoor activities and events that Maine has to offer is why we say “Maine, the Way Life Should Be”.

As the winter driving months are in front of us, we would like to remind everyone to be extra careful when driving our roadways, allow extra time to reach our destinations, keep vehicles well prepared and maintained and be courteous to one another. Also, the end of distracted driving starts in ME!

In order to bring a greater cross-section of safety professionals into our MTSC family, once again we welcome any new individuals interested in promoting transportation safety in Maine. Also please remember to send in any articles that you would like published in our quarterly newsletter.

Regards,

Alan



Chair's Corner

Walk & Bike Brightly this Season!

Now that Daylight Saving Time is over, sunset is coming much earlier. These days the sun is dipping below the horizon around 4:30pm and this will inch earlier and earlier until late December. This means it will be dark by the time many people head home from school or work each day. **Be Safe And Be Seen - Make yourself visible to drivers DURING ALL CONDITIONS, DAY OR NIGHT!**

Most serious crashes involving cars and people walking or biking occur because the driver claims they did not see the bicyclist or walker.

Don't find yourself in this position! Wear bright colored clothing, reflective material is best, carry a flashlight when walking, and remember that Maine law requires at least a light in front and a reflector in the rear when bicycling after dark. The best way to make sure car drivers can see you is to have a red blinking light in back and a bright white light in front.

You wouldn't drive your car at night without your headlights on, so please don't do so on your bike! For tips on riding in the dark, please visit bikemaine.org/lights



BIKE BRIGHTLY
BICYCLE COALITION OF MAINE

brushing teeth and changing clothes. The survey also found that one-third of drivers admitted to texting while driving, and three-quarters saying they've seen others do it. (ERIE INSURANCE)

Five seconds is the average time your eyes are off the road while texting. When traveling at 55mph, that's enough time to cover the length of a football field blind-folded. (2009, VTTI)

Smartphone ownership is growing. In 2011, 52 percent of drivers reported owning a smartphone, and by 2014 that number had grown to 80 percent. The greatest increases in smartphone ownership are among adults age 40 and older. (STATE FARM)

More than half (53%) of all adult cellphone owners have been on the giving or receiving end of a distracted walking encounter. (PEW RESEARCH)

NHTSA Focuses on Distracted Driving



With ever increasing demands on our personal and professional time in today's busy society, learning to juggle multiple tasks at once is something we all face daily. As a result, a new traffic safety epidemic has emerged on America's roadways that demand immediate attention: distracted driving.

In 2014, 3,179 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver. One of the most alarming and widespread forms of distracted driving is cell phone usage. According to a study by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI), sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes off the road for an average of 5 seconds, the equivalent of driving blind at 55-mph for the length of an entire football field. And a 2014 special article in the New England Journal of Medicine found that the risk of a crash or near-crash among novice drivers increased with the performance of many secondary tasks, including texting and dialing cell phones.

Text messaging is of heightened concern because it combines three types of distraction – visual, manual and cognitive. In other words, texting involves taking your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, and your mind off the task of driving.

To tackle this ever-increasing problem, NHTSA is focusing on ways to change the behavior of drivers through legislation, enforcement, public awareness and education—the same tactics that have curbed drinking and driving and increased seat belt use.

NHTSA's message is simple – “One Text or Call Could Wreck it All.” With supporters ranging from President Obama to Adam Levine and legislation being passed across the nation to discourage distracted driving, we hope drivers get the message loud and clear.

So the next time you are pressed for time, and it seems like multitasking in the car is the best decision, remember those 3,179 lives that were taken because someone decided they could do two things at once. A text or call is not worth your life, or anyone else's



Two Pedestrians and One Bicyclist Killed in Crashes



Bicycle Coalition of Maine monitoring situation

As the state's leading group promoting bicycling and walking safety, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine routinely monitors crash reports for incidents that involve bicyclists or pedestrians. The Coalition is dismayed to hear of two pedestrians and a bicyclist who have been hit and killed by cars.

- Matthew Perry, 30, was killed on October 10th when a car hit him in a parking lot in Biddeford.
- Dr. Carol Eckert, 63, died on October 13th from injuries she sustained when she was hit by a car as she rode her bicycle from work to her home in Windsor on the afternoon of Monday, October 10th.
- James Demeritt, 24, was killed on October 20th when he was hit by a car on Route 3 in Augusta.

These three deaths represent the 9th, 10th, and 11th fatalities of people walking or on a bike in Maine this year and comes after a year in which a record 19 people were killed on Maine's roadways while walking.

The incident again highlights the need for all people driving motor vehicles to watch for other users at all times and places, to obey local speed limits, and never to drive distracted or under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. This incident is also a reminder for all pedestrians and bicyclists to be alert and aware of their surroundings at all times, as traffic can behave unpredictably.

The Coalition is working with local law enforcement agencies to collect more information about the crashes and will continue to monitor the circumstances surrounding these incidents in an effort to improve roadway safety for all users.

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine is the statewide voice of cyclists and pedestrians. Since 1992, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine has led the effort to make Maine better for bicycling and walking by protecting the rights and safety of cyclists and pedestrians through education, advocacy, legislation and encouragement. We support biking and walking for health, transportation and recreation. For more information: bikemaine.org.

In the News

MaineDOT Infrastructure Improvement Funds!



MaineDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Funding is a newly revised funding program for communities to apply for bicycle & pedestrian infrastructure improvements. Safe Routes to School Projects remain an eligible activity under this funding source for projects within two miles of an elementary or middle school.



Infrastructure improvements such as school zone lights, traffic calming, and sidewalk improvements

are intended to be part of a larger effort within communities to improve conditions and raise awareness of the benefits of walking and biking to school.

For more information, visit the MaineDOT website: <http://www.maine.gov/mdot/pga/funding/>

November is Drowsy Driving Awareness

November 6 through 13 was Drowsy Driving Awareness week. This is always a good week to bring awareness to drowsy drivers since the change in Daylight Saving Time can throw off normal sleep patterns and leave some people feeling a little more tired than usual.

So what is the problem? According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there are 100,000 collisions on the roads every year due to drowsy driving, resulting in more than 1,500 deaths and 71,000 injuries. In order to avoid getting into these crashes, the National Sleep Foundation shares the following tips for drivers:

-Get a good night's sleep before a long drive. In addition to getting adequate sleep before driving, drivers can plan ahead to reduce the risk of drowsy driving in other ways. Some evidence exists that napping before a long drive may help make up for sleep loss in the short term and enhance wakefulness during the drive.

-Get off the road if you notice any signs of fatigue. Sleepiness causes auto crashes because it impairs performance and can ultimately lead to the inability to resist falling asleep at the wheel. Critical aspects of driving impairment associated with sleepiness are reaction time, vigilance, attention, and information processing

-Take a nap. Taking a break for a short nap (about 15 to 20 minutes) has been shown to improve subsequent performance, even among sleep-deprived people. However, nappers are often groggy for about 15 minutes upon awakening from naps longer than 20 minutes.

- Avoid driving between midnight and 6 a.m. During this period, your body wants to fall asleep. Regardless of your best intentions, no training, education, motivation, or skill level can reduce your need for sleep.

Two remedial actions can make a short-term difference in driving alertness:

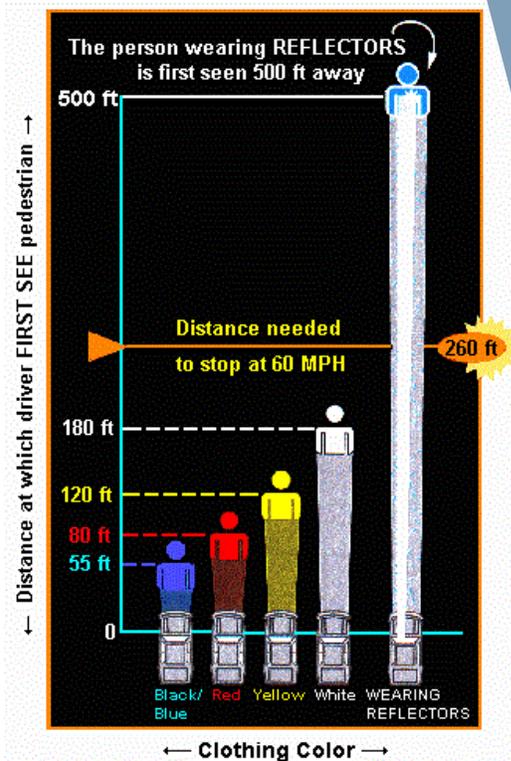
-Consume caffeine. Although not as effective as taking a nap, caffeine, even in low doses (two cup equivalent), significantly improves alertness in sleepy people.

-Drive with a friend. In a New York State survey of lifetime incidents, 82 percent of drowsy-driving crashes involved a single occupant. Having a friend available to help you stay alert or to take over the driving duties is a proven counter-measure.

In conclusion, the best way of preventing drowsy driving is with adequate sleep before driving. This is both easier and much more successful than any remedial measure. They are not a substitute for good sleep habits.

Dale Gilbert, Highway Safety Coordinator

Maine Bureau of Highway Safety



Safety Issues

Missing 1-2 Hours of Sleep Doubles Crash Risk

AAA Foundation study reveals the dangers of getting less than seven hours of sleep

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Dec. 6, 2016)- Drivers who miss between one to two hours of the recommended seven hours of sleep in a 24-hour period nearly double their risk for a crash, according to new research from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that 35 percent of U.S. drivers sleep less than the recommended seven hours daily. And with drowsy driving

involved in more than one in five fatal crashes on U.S. roadways each year, AAA warns drivers that getting less than seven hours of sleep may have deadly consequences.

“You cannot miss sleep and still expect to be able to safely function behind the wheel,” said Dr. David Yang, executive director for the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. “Our new research shows that a driver who has slept for less than five hours has a crash risk comparable to someone driving drunk.”

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety’s report, *Acute Sleep Deprivation and Risk of Motor Vehicle Crash Involvement*, reveals that drivers missing 2-3 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period more than quadrupled their risk of a crash compared to drivers getting the recom-

mended seven hours of sleep. This is the same crash risk the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration associates with driving over the legal limit for alcohol.

The AAA Foundation report found that in a 24-hour period, crash risk for sleep-deprived drivers increased steadily when compared to drivers who slept the recommended seven hours or more:

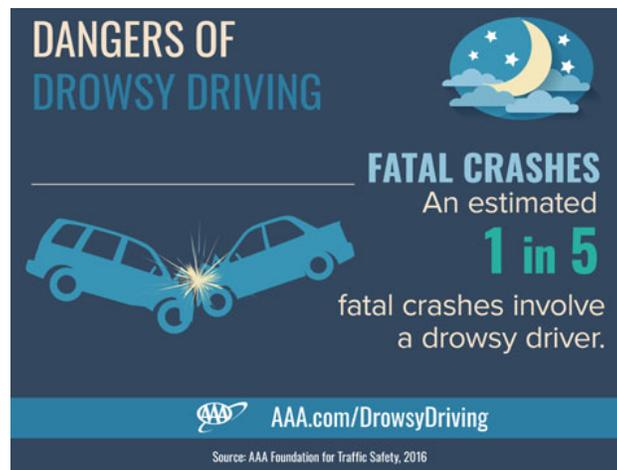
- Six to seven hours of sleep: 1.3 times the crash risk
- Five to six hours of sleep: 1.9 times the crash risk
- Four to five hours of sleep: 4.3 times the crash risk
- Less than four hours of sleep: 11.5 times the crash risk

While 97 percent of drivers told the AAA Foundation they view drowsy driving as a completely unacceptable

behavior that is a serious threat to their safety, nearly one in three admit that at least once in the past month they drove when they were so tired they had a hard time keeping their eyes open.

“Managing a healthy work-life balance can be difficult and far too often we sacrifice our sleep as a result,” said Jake Nelson, director of Traffic Safety Advocacy and Research for AAA. “Failing to maintain a healthy sleep schedule could mean putting yourself or others on the road at risk.”

Symptoms of drowsy driving can include having trouble keeping eyes open, drifting from lanes or not remembering the last few miles driven. However, more than half of drivers involved in fatigue-related crashes experienced no symptoms before falling asleep behind the wheel. AAA urges drivers to not rely on their





MTSC
 PO Box 818
 Augusta, ME 04332-0818

AAA Foundation Study Highlights Danger in Lack of Sleep

bodies to provide warning signs of fatigue and should instead prioritize getting plenty of sleep (at least seven hours) in their daily schedules.

For longer trips, drivers should also:

- Travel at times when normally awake
- Schedule a break every two hours or every 100 miles
- Avoid heavy foods
- Travel with an alert passenger and take turns driving
- Avoid medications that cause drowsiness or other impairment

The AAA Foundation report is based on the analysis of a representative sample of 7,234 drivers involved in 4,571 crashes. All data is from the NHTSA's National Motor Vehicle Crash Causation Survey which comprised a representative sample of police-reported crashes that involved at least one vehicle that was towed from the scene and resulted in emergency medical services being dispatched to the scene.

Established by AAA in 1947, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is a 501(c)(3) not-for-

profit, publicly-supported charitable educational and research organization. Dedicated to saving lives and reducing injuries on our roads, the Foundation's mission is to prevent crashes and save lives through research and education about traffic safety. The Foundation has funded over 300 research projects designed to discover

the causes of traffic crashes, prevent them and minimize injuries when they do occur.

Visit www.AAAFoundation.org for more information on this and other research.

As North America's largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA provides more than 56 million members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its

founding in 1902, the not-for-profit, fully tax-paying AAA has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. AAA clubs can be visited on the Internet at AAA.com. Motorists can map a route, identify gas prices, find discounts, book a hotel and access AAA roadside assistance with the AAA Mobile app for iPhone, iPad and Android. Learn more at AAA.com/mobile.



MTSC: Promoting Safe Transportation in Maine

**Mark Your Calendars and Save the Date(s)
 For the Maine Transportation Safety Coalition Meeting**

Check the Maine Transportation Safety Coalition at www.themtsc.org for upcoming meetings and events.