



DISTRACTED DRIVING

April 2019

This is an open letter to ALL drivers. If you are a professional Commercial Driver, please share this with family, friends and anyone that will listen!

We have all seen the signs of what has become an epidemic in our nation of using smart phones while driving.

Professional drivers know that handheld devices are prohibited by FMCSA regulations, but we still see commercial vehicle drivers holding and talking on phones.

A headset is a *necessity* for all drivers, but especially for drivers of commercial vehicles. Those who use hands-free devices (headset, speaker) to call or text know that it is still distracting, therefore it's best to keep your phone down.

A study done by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) shows when a driver tries to read or respond to a text, the smartphone takes attention away from the road for approximately five seconds. Traveling at 55 miles per hour, the vehicle would have traveled the length of a football field (300 feet) in just five seconds!

A lot can happen in five seconds (300 feet). For example, a rig with a 53-foot trailer is about 72 feet long from bumper to bumper. Three hundred feet equals just over four tractor trailer lengths of space.

No matter how large the vehicle may be, no one has the mental or reaction capacity to react to things that may happen in five seconds of distraction.

If you use your phone or text while driving, you are placing yourself, your family, and others on the road at risk. Often times a more tragic outcome occurs where people get hurt or die because drivers' attempt to use their phone while driving.

Here are the signs we all notice from smartphone-distracted drivers:

- Not holding a steady speed – constant slowing down and speeding up.
- Wandering in the lane, or even worse, straying out of a lane.
- Sitting at a traffic light long after it has turned green (there is no “good” time to use your phone when behind the wheel).
- Nearly hitting someone in the rear in traffic. When this type of rear-end crash happens, it is often at or near full speed and the results are devastating.
- Observing a driver looking down for long periods of time.
- Erratic braking.

This is a major problem on our highways and it has a simple solution – put the phone down.



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