

# Delta Health Watch

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated  
Philadelphia Alumnae Chapter  
*Physical and Mental Health Committee*



## Texting While Driving

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The cellular phone has brought with it many conveniences and luxuries. It has definitely made communication so much easier. However, when it comes to road safety, the cellular phone may be considered a hazard especially when Short Message Service was introduced.

Ever since the advent of text messages, society has grown aware of the dangers of texting while driving. Text messages are brief messages which are often limited to 160 characters and can be sent from one cell phone to another. This ability to be able to send short messages has been embraced by millions of people worldwide, as shown by the number of text messages exchanged every day.

Unfortunately, the service is so convenient that some people even compose and send text messages anytime and anywhere – while walking, eating, and even while driving. The growing number of accidents caused while texting and driving has put to the forefront the dangers of texting while driving.

Driving is an activity that

requires full concentration and composing, reading, and sending text messages will compromise the driver's concentration. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 16% of all fatal crashes in 2008 were caused by driver distraction. Nowadays, we can find many studies that examine the effects of texting while driving. The one conclusion they all seem to have is texting impairs a driver's abilities. One of the most obvious things that happen when a driver is texting while driving is that the driver would avert his eyes from the road for around five seconds. This is more than enough time for a person to run in front of the vehicle or for the vehicle in front of you to make a sudden stop or to miss seeing the light change.

Another thing that happens when a driver is texting is that his mind would be on the message he is reading or composing. This, of course, prevents the driver from thinking quickly and compromises his reflexes. Chances are, he will not be able to react quickly to a situation on the road because he is thinking of

something else.

Despite the urgency of any text message, the dangers of texting while driving

should be more than enough reason to put off texting. The best solution is to

put your cellular phone on silent mode while driving especially if you are not

expecting anything very important and urgent anyway. This way, you will not be

tempted to check and read any messages that come in. It is better to wait until

you reach your destination before reading or sending any text messages. Another

option is to stop driving if you absolutely must use your cell phone. Of course,

to prevent all kinds of dangers of texting while driving, make sure that your

car is in a safe place that will not obstruct traffic when you decide to use

your cell phone.

For more info, please visit - <http://texting-while-driving.org/>

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## OTHER DISTRACTIONS WHILE DRIVING



Many people spend a lot of hours in their cars. This time is spent going back and forth from their workplaces, their schools or their homes. Many people also use their cars for a variety of different purposes. Some people use it as a dresser while others use it as a breakfast table or a lunch room. Some people also use it as a place to hang out while others use it as a place to get away from the world. The car has become much more than a simple vehicle. Sadly though, thousands of people each year die of tragic car accidents around the world. Many of these accidents were the result of simple driving distractions that take away a driver's focus on the actual process of driving. A lot of these deaths could have been prevented easily and yet more people get hurt on the roads and highways every day.

Here are some of the most common distractions while driving that most drivers suffer from while driving.

**Answering Cell Phone Calls:** This is one of the most common distractions while driving. Many people do it despite it being very dangerous. Even headsets do not help much since it is the conversation that takes away a driver's focus on the road ahead.

**Multi Tasking:** Many people also try doing other things while driving like putting up make up or eating a burger. This can also be a potential cause for car accidents.

**Loud Music:** Some people like turning up their car stereos really loud when they like the music. Unfortunately this can also drown out important sounds from outside the car such as car horns and the engine sounds of other cars. These are important cues that help a driver become aware of his surroundings.

**Reading Maps:** People who are travelling in unfamiliar roads often bring maps with them for reference. Unfortunately, maps also take the driver's concentration from what he is doing. In the few seconds it takes to glance at a map, an accident can easily take place.

**Negative Emotional States:** Many people drive while undergoing extreme emotional stress. Negative emotions, especially anger can lead people to lose focus while driving. In some cases, it may even aggravate their driving styles. Many people drive more aggressively when they are angry. This is one of the most dangerous examples of distractions while driving.