



Distracted Driving – February 2013

Approved quote

“Driver distraction is the third leading cause of car crash fatalities in B.C. These are preventable tragedies, which is why we’re asking drivers to avoid distractions behind the wheel so they get to where they’re going safely,” said John Dickinson, ICBC’s Director of Road Safety. “To help, we’re offering free downloadable ringtones that remind drivers not to respond to calls or texts while driving. We want to help drivers keep focused on the task of driving so that our roads are safer for everyone.”

Link to ringtones

<http://icbcdrivesmart.ca/distractions>

Key messages

- We want you to get there with care, so make the smart choice and leave the phone alone when you’re behind the wheel.
- Driving is a complex task that requires your full attention. You are four times more likely to crash when talking on a hand-held mobile phone while driving, and 23 times more likely to get in a crash if you text while driving.
- ICBC is offering free downloadable reminder ringtones to help B.C. drivers keep their minds on the road.

Educational tips

- Pull over to make or receive a call or send a text. Make sure you’re safely off to the side of the road so you’re not a danger to other vehicles.
- Take a message. Let your mobile phone pick up your calls and text messages. It’s easier and much safer to retrieve your messages at a later time.
- Ask your passengers to make or receive calls for you.
- Plan ahead to avoid distraction. Turn your mobile phone off or place it in the trunk of your car and/or in the back seat so you won’t be tempted to talk, email or text when you’re on the road.
- Download ICBC’s free ringtones at www.icbc.com/drivesmart to remind yourself to leave the phone alone when you’re driving.

Statistics

Police reported five year average (2007-2011)

- Distracted driving is responsible for about one quarter of all car crash fatalities in B.C.
- Distracted driving is the third leading cause of car crash fatalities in B.C., with 94 deaths due to driver distractions, such as using a personal electronic device behind the wheel.
- Distracted driving is narrowly trailing behind other high profile causes of fatal collisions: on average, 129 deaths occur in speed-related crashes, and 113 in impaired-related crashes.

Ipsos Reid survey, conducted on behalf of ICBC (March 2012)

- B.C. drivers consider texting while driving to be just as risky as drinking and driving.

- Three quarters (73%) of B.C. drivers consider texting while at an intersection or stop sign to be risky behaviour.
- Overall, 87% of B.C. drivers own a cell phone and 40% of this group say that they have used their cell phone while driving.
- Under half (44%) of B.C. drivers consider driving to be a complex task. Drivers who say that driving is not complex are more likely to use an electronic device (52%).