**Cell Phones and Driving: A Killer Combination**

*[](http://dropitanddrive.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/iStock_000016997460XSmall.jpg)Guest Post by Colleen Harding, Posted March 23, 2012 at DropitandDrive.com*

**Talking or texting while driving is equivalent to being drunk behind the wheel**

When working for a personal injury law firm, you often get to witness a ton of legal claims against distracted drivers who caused auto collisions—many of which were talking or texting on their cell phones. In fact, studies from the University of Utah show that those drivers who talk on cell phones, both hands-on and hands-free, are [as distracted as drunken drivers](http://www2.potsdam.edu/hansondj/DrivingIssues/20060830105036.html). A second study actually showed that using a cell phone while driving actually alters the driver’s behavior in the following ways:

* They tend to exceed the average driving speed
* Their break and reaction time decreases
* They have slower responses to sudden changes—like animals on the road or traffic light changes
* They pay less attention to driving mirrors
* They tend to stray out of their driving lane
* They have difficulty keeping distance between their car and traffic in front of them

Obviously may states and countries agree that driving and cell phones don’t mix—with at least 30 countries banning driving while using a mobile phone all together. And the research backs it up across the board, showing that individual [drivers have greater difficulty](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/29773.php) maintaining a set speed, tending to speed up then slow down, which frustrates and confuses other drivers. In fact, the practice of performing a task, like driving, is greatly impaired when having a conversation or texting on a mobile phone. Even when it comes to hands-free calls, the specific acts of speaking and listening to a phone conversation simply distracts drivers too much from the task at hand.

**Statistics for operating a cell phone while driving**

The statistics captured by leading motor vehicle and health organizations around the world concur—driving while operating a cell phone is a dangerous combination that can end in an auto accident or even death of one or more passengers in a motor vehicle. For instance:

* When talking on a mobile phone, drivers are shown to be 18 percent slower to react to brake lights.
* Drivers are more cautious while conversing; however, they take 17 percent longer to return to regular speeds after breaking, which, understandably, frustrates following traffic.
* Drivers talking on mobile phones are responsible for 2,600 deaths and 330,000 injuries in the United States annually.
* In Canada, 6 people die every day in road crashes with more than 218,000 injuries and  2,900 deaths just since January 1, 2011
* One out of 4 car crashes is caused by distracted drivers using a cell phone.
* Texting while driving is [equivalent to drinking 4 beers](http://www.doctoroz.com/videos/deadly-distraction-cell-phones-and-driving) and then getting behind the wheel.
* 1 in 5 adult drivers admit to using a cell phone while driving.
* While 1 in 2 teens admit to texting or calling while behind the wheel of a car.

***About The Author***

Colleen Harding is a staff writer for a [Denver personal injury lawyer](http://www.coloradolaw.net/) and a guest blogger who specializes on writing about law. Today, Colleen hopes that sharing her knowledge will make us all happy, law-abiding citizens. She is also a member of Amnesty International as well as an active volunteer in her community.