

DISTRACTED DRIVING

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

**MICHIGAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNERS ASSOCIATION
2011 CONFERENCE**

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What is Distracted Driving?

- **Any non-driving activity a person engages in that has the potential to distract him or her from the primary task of driving and increase the risk of crashing.**



Three Main Types of Distraction

- **Visual**
 - Taking your eyes off the road
- **Manual**
 - Taking your hands off the wheel
- **Cognitive**
 - Taking your mind off what you're doing.



SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Texting is the most alarming because it involves all three types of distraction.



SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Other Distracted Driving Activities Include

- Using a cell phone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a PDA or navigation system
- Watching a video
- Changing the radio station, CD, or MP3 player.



SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



- **Passenger conversations are usually low risk because the passenger(s) should be providing shared problem-solving, collective situation awareness, and active support of the driver.**



SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



In 2009

- **Nearly 5,500 people were killed and almost a half million were injured in crashes related to distracted driving.**
 - **That's 16 percent of all fatal crashes and 20 percent of all injury crashes for that year.**
 - **Almost one in five of those deaths involved reports of a cell phone.**



SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



A Virginia Tech Transportation Institute Study

- **Physically dialing a phone while driving increases the risk of a crash as much as six times.**
- **Texting is riskier still, increasing the collision risk by 23 times.**



- **Studies show that when a driver looks away from the road to send a text or e-mail message, he or she is concentrating on something other than the road for 4.6 of every six seconds.**
 - **At 55 miles per hour, that is like driving the length of a football field while blindfolded.**



SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Three Lives Lost



Sarah Edwards, 18 North Carolina

- Sarah was reading a text message when her car crossed the center line of a two-lane road and ran into the rear wheels of a loaded logging truck. She died instantly.



Angelina Bandino, 15 California

- **Angelina was walking along a road near her home when she was struck and killed by an 18-year-old driver in a pickup truck who was typing a text message.**



SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Caleb Sorohan, 18 Georgia

- Caleb had been texting with his friend while driving before his car veered into the opposing lane and collided head-on with a truck.

Texting turned fatal

Reading text message while driving the cause behind local teen's death

By PATRICK YOST
EDITOR

A 2009 Morgan County High School graduate was reading a text message while driving when he collided head-on with a truck pulling a horse trailer and died last Wednesday.

TFC Tom Bailey, Georgia State Patrol, said 18-year-old Caleb Sorohan, Rutledge, died instantly when his 2004 Saturn crossed over the center line of Fairplay Road and collided with a 2008 Toyota Sequoia driven by Katrin Sheehan, 39, Madison. Sheehan, Bailey said, was transported to Morgan Memorial Hospital and released. A passenger in the truck, Barbara Frische, 48, was airlifted to Grady Memorial Hospital and released over the weekend, Bailey said.

The accident occurred at 3:33 p.m. near the intersection of Fairplay Road on a curve leading into Hard Labor Creek State Park.

Sorohan was a popular student at Morgan County High School, where



Caleb Sorohan

he played football and served as the manager for the Morgan County High School baseball team. He was home for the Christmas break from North Georgia College.

"The best we can figure at this point, given the timeline of his cell phone use, is that he was texting at the time of the wreck," Bailey said.

Sorohan had received and sent six text messages in a seven-minute period prior to the collision, the last at 3:26 p.m. His phone was found on his lap.

Bailey said Sheehan reported that Sorohan was weaving towards her in the northbound lane and that she blew her horn several times prior to the collision to get the teen's attention.

More than 300 people gathered at Madison's St. James Catholic Church for funeral services last Saturday.

Bailey said the accident is a tragic re-

See ACCIDENT Page 8A



A memorial on Fairplay Road, near the site of the accident, was set up following the death of 18-year-old Caleb Sorohan. Various items were added as the week progressed. Photo by A. Bellebuono.



SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Remembering Ally: Distracted Driving Awareness Campaign

- In May of 2011, the Atlanta-based Global Transportation Safety Alliance hosted a distracted driving public forum in Clinton Township to discuss the launch of a national campaign.
- The campaign is named in memory of Ally Zimmerman, a 16-year-old Romeo High School student, who was recently killed by a distracted driver.



- **The campaign will include posters, TV and radio public service announcements, and a multimedia presentation.**
 - **Planned release is late 2011 or early 2012.**



- **Agencies that are supporting the public education effort include:**
 - **Chesterfield Police Department**
 - **Clawson Police Department**
 - **Clinton Township Police Department**
 - **Eastpointe Police Department**
 - **Ferris State University Department of Public Safety**
 - **Lake Orion Police Department**



- Livonia Police Department
- Macomb County Sheriff's Office
- Michigan State Police
- Michigan State University Department of Public Safety
- Richmond Police Department
- Romeo Police Department
- Southfield Police Department
- St. Clair Shores Police Department



- Sterling Heights Police Department
- Traffic Improvement Association
- Troy Police Department
- Numerous citizens, and high school and college students also were in attendance.



- **Several attendees also expressed that a comprehensive statewide distracted driving law is needed in Michigan.**
 - **The task is underway and the push will be for the proposed law to be called “Ally’s Law.”**



***The Campaign Will Also Address
Distracted Pedestrians and
Bicyclists***

***Your Eyes and Ears are your
Resources***



Some Auto Manufactures Are Addressing Distracted Driving

- **Example:**
 - **Ford Motor Company's SYNC**
 - **SYNC is an easy-to-use in-car connectivity system that allows you to make hands-free calls and control your music and other functions with simple voice commands.**



– SYNC Features Include:

- Hand-free Calling
- Turn-by-Turn Directions
- 911 Assist
- Music Search
- Vehicle Health Report
- Personalized Daily Info
- Business Search
- Traffic Alerts
- Audible Text Messages



SOURCE: FORD MOTOR COMPANY



AT&T's Don't Text While Driving Documentary



DISTRACTED DRIVING

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

PART DEUX

IS LEGISLATION THE ANSWER?



Preview

- **Distracted driving phenomenon**
- **There will ALWAYS be distractions in everything we say or do.**
 - **Human Nature**
- **The very real need to reduce or limit the number and kinds of distractions that are most associated with driving a motor vehicle.**



Education

- **What messages do we need to get across?**
 - **The dangers of distracted driving.**
 - **It is not ALL about cell phones!**
 - **Requires behavioral changes/breaking bad habits!**
 - **Think about other drivers; It's not all about you!!!**
 - **It should include the “What ifs”**
 - **It should include consequences for continuing distracted driving behaviors.**

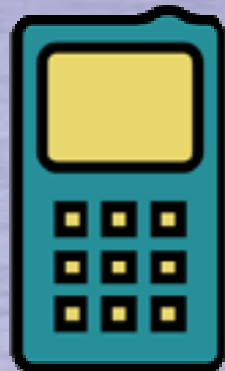


- The education message should be, regarding cell phones and electronics use: **DON'T USE THEM WHILE YOU ARE DRIVING.....PERIOD!**
- Hand Held cell phones are dangerous because they occupy one hand AND the danger is in the cognitive aspect of the conversation.
- Hands-Free cell phones are dangerous because of the cognitive nature of the conversation.
- In the City of Troy, our message has always been: **IF you have to use a phone make sure it is a hands-free device and the conversation should be of short duration; i.e. bring something home for dinner, etc.**



• Cell phones from 15-20 years ago?

- You make a call
- You receive a call



• CELL PHONES TODAY

- You can TEXT
- You can look at photo's
- You can make appointments
- You can listen to music
- You can hold conference calls
- You have hundreds of other applications



- **Education of the public is key to any successful Traffic Safety campaign**
- **This holds true with Seat Belt enforcement**
- **This is holding true with OWI enforcement**
- **It will hold true for Distracted Driving**



- **Worked with the Traffic Improvement Association (TIA) to create an informational postcard.**
- **Worked with Drivers Against Texting and Talking (DATT) to develop posters and signs.**



ENGINEERING

- **Technology**
- **Automobile Industry**
- **Cell Phone Industry**



ENFORCEMENT

- **Buy-in by all parties involved**
- **Legislation**
- **Warning/Education Phase**
- **Ticket Writing**



CITY OF TROY ORDINANCE

- **True Distracted Driving Ordinance**
- **Three Sections:**
 - 1. Covers Texting**
 - 2. Covers Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices**
 - 3. Covers other Distracted Driving behaviors**



- **Section 1:** The physical manipulation of any 2-way wireless electronic communication device used for dialing numbers; scrolling; or typing or entering multiple letters, numbers, symbols, or other text; or the sending, receiving, and reading of any non-voice data in the device while the motor vehicle is in motion on any highway or street or place open to the general public within the City of Troy. As used in this subsection, a wireless 2-way communication device does not include a global positioning or navigation system that is affixed to the motor vehicle.



- **Section 2: The physical manipulation or handling of any wireless entertainment or electronic communication device for the purpose of speaking into, or listening to voice data, while the motor vehicle is in motion on any highway or street or place open to the general public within the City of Troy.**



- **Section 3: Any action by the driver of a motor vehicle that diverts his or her attention resulting in the failure to use due care and caution in the safe operation of a motor vehicle while the vehicle is in motion on any highway or street or place open to the general public within the City of Troy. Such action can include but is not limited to: eating, writing, performing personal hygiene/grooming, physical interaction with pets, passengers, or unsecured cargo, any of which is done in a manner that prohibits the driver from maintaining direct physical control of the motor vehicle steering mechanism with at least one hand that is free of all other objects and used entirely to form a controlled grip on the steering mechanism.**



- **EXCEPTIONS**

- Report a traffic crash, medical emergency, or serious road hazard.
- Report a situation in which the person believes his or her personal safety is in jeopardy.
- Report the perpetration or potential perpetration of a criminal act against the individual or another person.
- Carry out official duties as a police officer, law enforcement official, member of a paid or volunteer fire department, or operator of an emergency vehicle.



QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS



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