Dear Driver:

The problem remains! Distracted driving continues to be a leading problem on roadways in the United States. In 2017, 3,166 people were killed by distracted driving. In “2016 during daylight hours, approximately 481,000 drivers used cell phones while driving. That creates enormous potential for deaths and injuries on U.S. roads.” Most drivers see the problem for themselves when they drive. The question is, are you part of the problem or have you committed to keeping yourself and others safe by driving without distractions? According to the NHTSA, one of the most deadly forms of distraction is texting while driving.

The NHTSA’s 2019 “U Drive. U Text. U Pay” enforcement campaign sample talking points are listed below:

**The Frightening Stats**

- Between 2012 and 2017, nearly 20,000 people died in crashes involving a distracted driver.
- Thankfully, there was a decrease in total fatalities from 2016 (3,490) to 2017 (3,166), but even one fatality is one too many, which is why we must work together to spread the message about the dangers of texting and driving.
- Distracted-driving-related fatalities comprised 9.5% of all fatal crashes for the last six years (2012-2017).
- Texting while driving continues to be an especially problematic trend among millennials. In fact, in 2017, 8 percent of people killed in teen (15-19) driving crashes died when teen drivers were distracted at the time of the crashes.
- According to NHTSA, young drivers 16 to 24-years-old have been observed using handheld electronic devices while driving at higher rates than older drivers since 2007.
- In 2016, nine percent of drivers 15 to 19-years-old who were involved in fatal vehicle crashes were reported as being distracted at the time of the crash. This age group has the largest percentage of drivers who were distracted at the time of a fatal crash.
- Handheld cell phone use while driving is highest among 15 to 29-year-old drivers, but female drivers are most at-risk for being involved in a fatal crash involving a distracted driver.
- Female drivers with a cell phone have been more likely to be involved in fatal distracted driving crashes as compared to male drivers every year since 2012.

**Safety Tips for Driving**

- If you are expecting a text message or need to send one, pull over and park your car in a safe location. Once you are safely off the road and parked, it is safe to text.
- Designate your passenger as your “designated texter.” Allow them access to your phone to respond to calls or messages.
- Do not engage in social media scrolling or messaging while driving. It was there when you left home, and it will be there when you check it later.
- Cell phone use can be habit-forming. Struggling to not text and drive? Put the cell phone in the trunk, glove box, or back seat of your vehicle until you arrive at your destination.

**Put Your Phone Away or Get Ready to Pay**
• When you get behind the wheel, be an example to your co-workers, family and friends by putting your phone away. Texting and driving is a selfish, potentially deadly, and, oftentimes, illegal activity that could kill you, a loved one, a friend, or a stranger.
• In 47 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, texting while driving is an illegal, ticketable offense. You could end up paying a hefty fine and getting points on your driving record.
• If you see something, say something. If your friends text while driving, tell them to stop. Listen to your passengers: If they catch you texting while driving and tell you to put your phone away, put it down.
• Remember, when you get behind the wheel, put your phone away.

U Drive. U Text. U Pay

Resources