

# Risk Alert



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## Reducing crash risks associated with using cellphones while driving

Numerous states have enacted legislation to limit or prohibit the use of cellphones while driving. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, driving while talking on a cellphone puts drivers at a four times greater risk of an injury-causing crash. Using cellphones and other wireless devices while driving poses a significant safety risk to the vehicle operator, their passengers and others on the road.

Hazardous driving distractions such as eating, smoking, reading a map or adjusting a GPS are risky exposures but not as risky as operating a cellphone. This is because cellphone use occurs more frequently and for much longer durations than other distracting behaviors. In addition, cellphones involve all three types of driver distraction: they take your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel and your attention off driving, all at the same time.



### Create a no cellphone use while driving policy

Create and enforce a policy in your organization to ban cellphone use while driving. Points your organization should consider adding to your no cellphone while driving policy:

- Clearly state that the use of electronic devices, either handheld or hands-free, while driving is not permitted.
- Encourage employees to develop a habit of turning off their cellphones when getting into a vehicle and turning them back on when they are done driving. If employees can't turn their phone off, require the phone be switched to vibrate or silent mode.
- Do not allow employees to answer calls while driving. Incoming calls must be directed to voice mail. Ask them to consider recording a voice mail greeting indicating they are unavailable to answer calls while driving and they will return calls or messages as soon as they are able.
- Do not allow employees to read or respond to text messages and emails while driving.
- Require employees to pull over to a safe location and park the vehicle if a call must be made or received while on the road.
- If employees drive with a passenger, have them ask the passenger to operate the phone or let the passenger drive so they can freely make or receive calls.

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