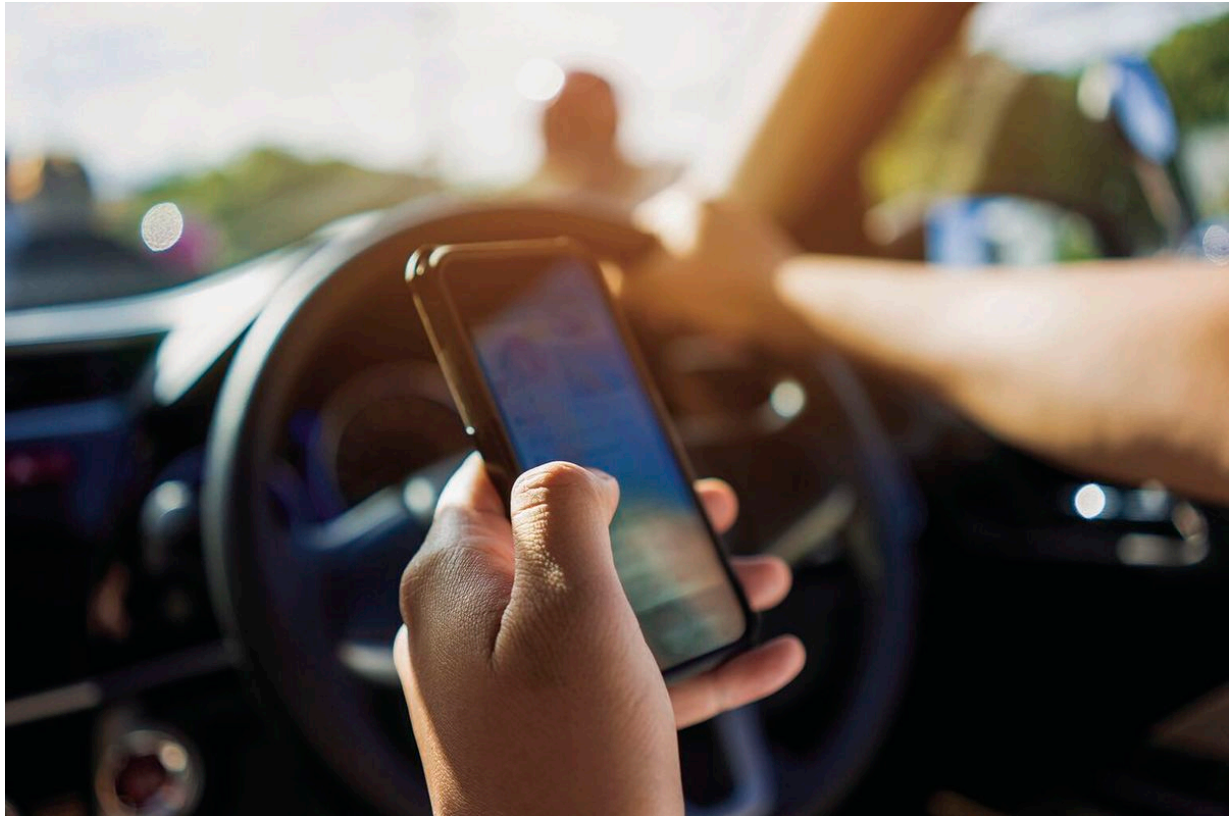


Park Your Phone! Districted driving campaign, enforcement

April 12, 2022



Oregon State transportation officials and law enforcement agencies have partnered in an awareness campaign about distracted driving.

The Park Your Phone campaign includes enhanced law enforcement with police and sheriff deputies watching for distracted drivers.

By the numbers

There were 1,920 crashes causing 20 fatalities in Oregon from 2015 through 2019 involving a driver using a cell phone, as well as 1,880 injuries, according to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Cell phones aren't the only distraction to driving. During that five-year period, all distractions - including cell phones - were a factor in 23,783 crashes resulting in 158 fatalities and 23,403 injuries in Oregon.

What is distracted driving?

Distraction occurs when a driver voluntarily diverts attention to something not related to driving that uses the driver's eyes, ears, hands or mind, according to ODOT. There are four types of driver distraction:

- Visual – Looking at something other than the road.
- Auditory – Hearing something not related to driving.
- Manual – hands on something other than the wheel.
- Cognitive – Thinking about something other than driving.

Most distractions involve more than one of these four types, with both a sensory – eyes, ears, or touch – and a mental component, mind.

"We know that distracted driving is vastly underreported in crash statistics; drivers are reluctant to include it in crash reports and it is difficult for law enforcement to detect," an ODOT release states.

During this month, there will be distracted driving high visibility enforcement statewide to prevent these tragedies.

Penalties even without a crash

In Oregon it is illegal to use a handheld mobile electronic device while driving. A first offense without a crash can cost up to a \$1,000 fine. Later convictions can result in fines up to \$2,500 and six months in jail.

"When you're behind the wheel, there is nothing more important than paying attention," ODOT Distracted Driving Program Manager Kelly Kapri said. "If you let something distract you, you could end up in a serious or deadly crash. And it might not be others hurt or killed – it could be you."