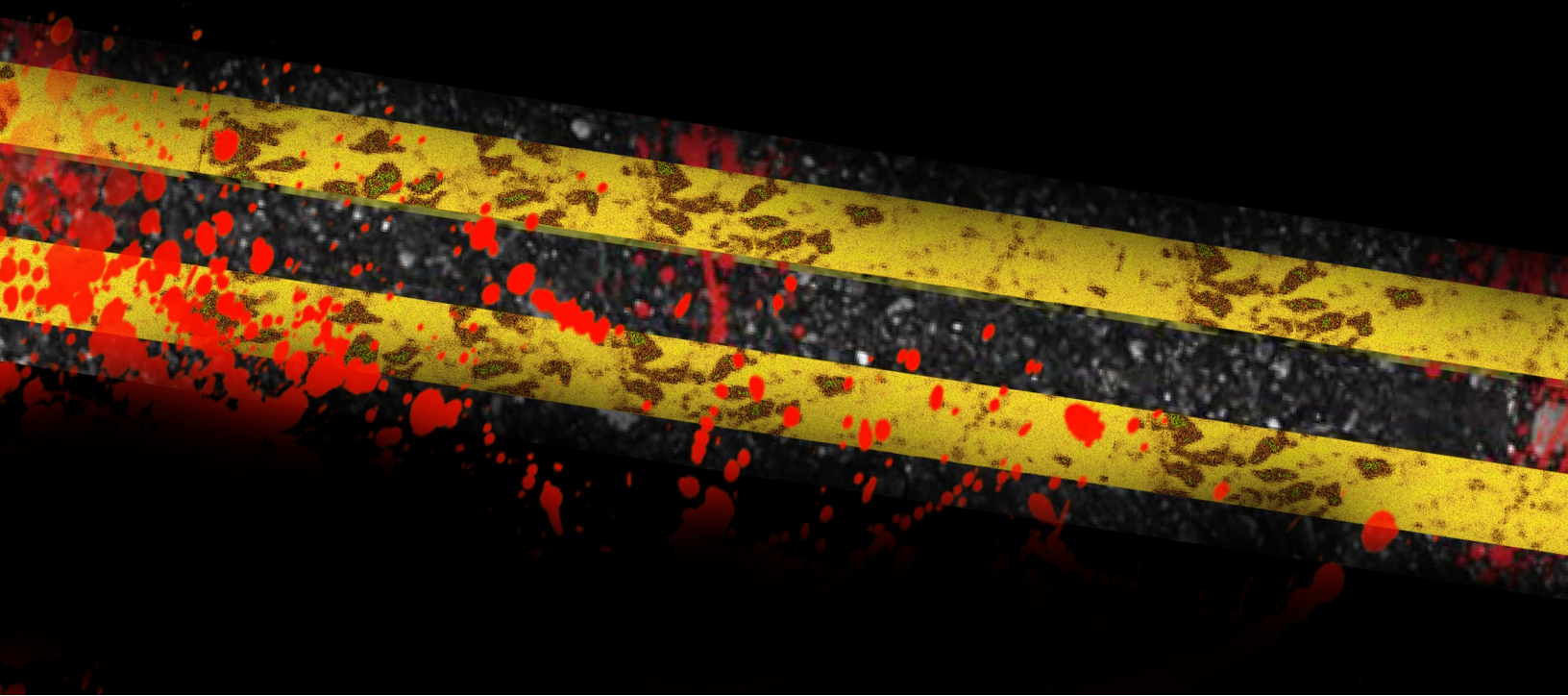


TEXTING
TRILLS



TEXTING KILLS

If you knew the #1 killer in American teenagers, would you try to stop it?

Recently Taylor Sauer, a Utah State University student, made a post on Facebook that

said "I can't discuss this matter now. Driving and Facebooking is not safe. ha ha."

Moments later she was instantly killed from crashing into a semitrailer. Investigators say

traveling at 88mph and sending one text a minute caused her death. The fact is, texting

while driving is the #1 killer for American teenagers and is an issue that needs to be confronted.

1. Problem

Texting and Driving is new to our culture and therefore is a bit difficult to deal

with. Each year we come to a greater understanding of just how dangerous it is. The

News and Police surveyed the concern only to present deadly results. Outrageously, studies show that 5,474 deaths could have been prevented if all drivers refrained from

texting while driving in Utah. With advances in technology, it has increased the risks on

the road, and if unchecked it will lead to more deaths and injuries.



When texting first began, phones were much like their predecessors which made

texting easy because you could feel the keys, providing a way to keep your eyes on the

road. The problem approaching us today is most phones have switched to touch screens

requiring our eyes to divert more attention to our texts. The problem only exceeds from

here. More and more drivers are also using social networking sites while driving, a task

that is much more tedious than texting.

Is there any way to stop this madness? States all over the US have taken

responsibility and have passed laws to prohibit cell phone use. States vary in their

restrictions. Some restrict all handheld phone use. Some restrict texting/email. Others

only restrict the use of cell phones for minors and other risky drivers. In our state, Utah,

the use of a cell phone for anything other than a phone call can be considered distracting

driving. Texting and driving is considered a primary law meaning an officer has the right

to pull you over if you are texting and driving.

Of course, when the law was written certain exceptions were permitted for

emergencies. Texting is permitted during medical emergencies, when reporting a safety

hazard, when reporting criminal activity, requesting assistance relating to a hazard or

criminal activity, or when used by law enforcement while acting in the scope of their

employment.

According to the Utah Department of Health survey, 23% of adults text and drove

daily before the law banned it. Now that the law is in effect, the percentage has raised to

26% of adults who text and drive daily, so obviously the law is not very effective.



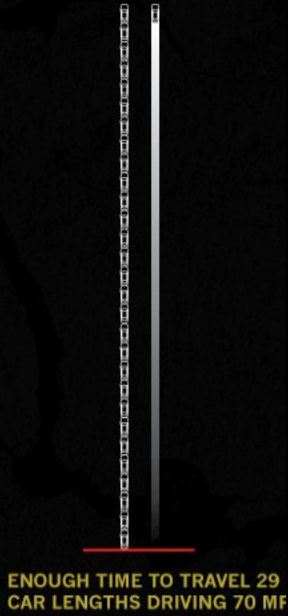
A CAR AND DRIVER STUDY COMPARED THE DISTANCE REQUIRED TO STOP WHILE DRIVING 35 MPH. RELATIVE TO AN UNIMPEDED DRIVER

A TEXTING DRIVER TRAVELS 25 MORE FEET BEFORE STOPPING

A DRUNK DRIVER TRAVELS 4 MORE FEET BEFORE STOPPING.



A VIRGINIA TECH STUDY VIDEO RECORDED REAL WORLD DRIVERS FOR 18 MONTHS. RESEARCHERS FOUND THAT DRIVERS WHO WERE INVOLVED IN A CRASH WHILE USING THEIR PHONES HAD TYPICALLY BEEN STARING AT THEM FOR SECONDS.



Representative Paul Ray, who helped pass the 2009 legislation, states the problem is in

people not following the law initially. "The laws are there." Ray confirmed. "The

problem is getting people to follow them. It comes down to personal responsibility.

Whether you have the law or not, it's not safe." You might not receive jail time the first

time you are caught texting while driving, but the first offense is considered a class C misdemeanor, and if caught again within three months, your license will presumably be

suspended.

There are four degrees of distraction. 1) Audio: the noise that distracts you. 2)

Visual: taking your eyes off the road. 3) Manual: taking your hands off the wheel. 4)

Cognitive: taking your mind off driving. When you make the choice to text and drive you

are distracted by the visual, manual, and cognitive distractions that put you, as well as

others, at risk. Virginia Tech Driving Institute revealed a study that said drivers are 23

times more likely to be involved in an accident while texting and driving. The problems

of texting and driving are only going to escalate if we don't come up with solutions.

2. Solutions

By helping everyone be more aware of the dangers of texting and driving we are

hoping people will think twice about answering their texts while driving. To help the

awareness, people can wear rings or wrist bands that say "texting kills" as a reminder to



those around them not to text while driving. Placing bumpers stickers on cars with an anti

texting message on it, such as, "Driving While InTXTicated... KILLS!" can also build

awareness. There are also free apps you can download to your phone like the "Tex'n

Drive" app. This app allows you to hear and speak your reply. Along with that, newer

Bluetooth headsets allow you to send text messages by speaking the message also. We

understand that there are some who are unable to let a text go by without replying

because of their addiction. We encourage you to get your friends to help you stop if you

have this problem. On the flip side, most everyone has a friend who texts while driving,

and some easy phrases you can say when they start texting are; "Sorry, but I feel uncomfortable when someone is texting and driving at the same time.", "Do you want me

to send that text for you while you drive?", or "I heard something about a new law that

says you can get a ticket for texting and driving." There are also pledges you could sign,

like the one we are going to have, that say you will no longer text and drive. Knowing

you are part of a group can help you stick to your word better because you will know you

are not alone. If everyone is aware and helps others not to text and drive then the issue of

texting and driving will no longer be a problem.

3. Taking Action

We are four college students who support the law of no texting while driving. To

make more people aware of this issue we are in the process of designing posters, billboards, and a magazine ad to get the word out that texting kills. We are making a

brochure to inform people on the facts behind texting while driving to publicize how

dangerous it really is. Our launch piece for this campaign is a website that will allow people to get information on texting and driving as well as take a short quiz on their

experiences they've had with texting and driving. We are interviewing individuals who

have had emotional incidences with texting and driving, and profiling the results to help



others understand how real it is and that it can happen to anyone. You don't necessarily

have to be the one texting to be in an accident that involves texting and driving. We are

also writing a press release in hopes to persuade those who text and drive to stop it!

Lastly, we are making a radio PSA to broadcast our message against texting and driving

that will add more awareness about the issue.

4. Acknowledgements

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writing the radio PSA, and writing up profiles.

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