

## How Dangerous Is Talking On The Cell Phone While Driving?

Forty countries around the world ban or restrict cell phone use while driving - and each year, more and more states are following suit with laws against driving distractions such as talking on mobile phones while driving. Even North Carolina is considering more cell phone laws this year - including a bill that would make texting on mobile devices illegal. All in all, around 17 states have passed laws partially banning or restricting the use of cell phones or other mobile devices while in a moving vehicle.

How dangerous is it to drive while talking on your cell phone? Ongoing research is revealing that the simple act of chatting on the phone while driving could lead to a significant number of injuries and deaths each year, according to the Insurance Information Institute (III). As of 2007, over 70 percent of drivers talked on cell phones while driving, with an even higher number of younger, less experienced drivers chatting while driving. Almost half of those who spoke on the phone while driving also texted while driving.

An Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) study found that motorists who used cell phones were four times more likely to injure themselves or others while driving. At the same time, A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study found that 80 percent of car accidents and 65 percent of near-crashes were related to a few seconds of driver distraction a few moments before the collision incident. A study by the University of Utah found that using a cell phone while driving was as dangerous as driving drunk.

Some studies have even suggested that the use of hands-free devices may not completely curb or stop the problem of mobile device driving distractions. Although some states are beginning to ban cell phones in cars but allow Bluetooth technology and hands-free devices, there is Australian research that shows the sole act of being distracted by the device and the conversation could be enough to cause accidents.