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CARE's WorkLife Solutions Weekly Wire

The Dangers of Texting While Driving

March 9, 2011

This week's Weekly Wire is taken from one of the many articles found on our website. This topic was inspired as a result of a talking point brought up at our last Leadership Link and Learn meeting.

To access this article: Log-on to www.caresworklivesolutions.com, click on the World Icon and enter your unique company password. (If you do not have a unique company password, please contact CARE's WorkLife Solutions to request a temporary password.) Next, click on the Site Search tab on the right. Enter the term "Texting" and you will find this article, as well as others relevant to that term.

You can use the Site Search tab to explore many more website resources that our website offers, such as close to 100 online skill Builder Trainings on various topics and over 100 Ready Docs.

The Dangers of Texting While Driving

Distracted driving is dangerous.

The popularity of mobile devices has had some unintended and even dangerous consequences. Mobile communications is linked to a significant increase in distracted driving, resulting in injury and loss of life. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported in 2008 that driver distraction was the cause of 16% of all fatal crashes—5,800 people killed—and 21% of crashes resulting in an injury—515,000 people wounded. According to AAA, nearly 50% of teens admit to texting while driving. Distracted driving endangers life and property and the current levels of injury and loss are unacceptable.

To stem this problem, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is working with industry, safety organizations, and other government agencies, to inform and educate the public about the dangers of distracted driving and is seeking to identify and facilitate the development of innovative technologies that could reduce the incidence of distracted driving. To help in this effort and share information, FCC created a dedicated website, <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/driving.html>.

Distracted Driving Information Clearinghouse

To collect and share information about consumer outreach activities and technology that could potentially reduce the problem of distracted driving, the Commission staff has created the FCC Distracted Driving Information Clearinghouse at http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/driving_clearinghouse.html.

State Laws

Currently there is no national ban on texting or using a wireless phone while driving, but a number of states have passed laws banning texting or wireless phones or requiring hands-free use of wireless phones while driving. For more information on state laws, visit www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/laws/cellphone_laws.html.

What You Can Do

Give clear instructions. Give teen drivers simple, clear instructions not to use their wireless devices while driving. According to The Wireless Association, originally known as the Cellular Telephone Industries Association (CTIA), the easiest way to say it is: "On the road, off the phone." Before new drivers get their licenses, discuss the fact that taking their eyes off the road—even for a few seconds—could cost someone injury or even death.

Lead by example. Children learn from their parent's behavior. No one should text and drive. Be an example for your children and if you need to text or talk on the phone, pull over to a safe place.

Become informed and be active. Review the information in FCC's Clearinghouse and the literature on the Web sites mentioned above. Set rules for yourself and your household regarding distracted driving. Tell family, friends and organizations to which you belong about the importance of driving without distractions. Take information to your children's schools and ask that it be shared with students and parents.

For More Information

For more information about wireless devices and driving, visit the FCC's Distracted Driving website at <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/driving.html>.

For information on other communications issues, you can

- Visit the FCC's Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau Web site at <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb>
- Contact the FCC's Consumer Center by e-mailing fccinfo@fcc.gov
- Call the FCC's Consumer Center at (888) CALL-FCC (225-5322) voice or (888) TELL-FCC (835-5322) TTY
- Fax the FCC's Consumer Center at (866) 418-0232, or
- Write to the FCC by sending correspondence to:
Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
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