

MSU-ES Dawg Tracks



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Cell Phone Safety



MISSISSIPPI STATE
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Cell telephone use is still increasing. It is currently estimated that in the U.S. there are an additional 30,000 phones in use every day.

A research study group from the University of Toronto found that:

~Cell phone users were four to five times more likely to have crashes than non-users.

~Cell phone units that allow the hands to be free offer no safety advantage over the hand-held units.

Cell phones are very convenient, but are also very hazardous. The American Automobile Association offers these tips:

- Make sure that your phone is mounted where you can easily reach it while driving. It should be in comfortable reach and as close as possible to your line of vision.
- Know all the functions of your phone and learn to use it without looking.
- Maintain your attention on the road by programming frequently called numbers into your phone's memory to minimize dialing.
- Dial sensibly. Either you should pull off the road to dial or ask a passenger to dial for you.
- Refrain from using the phone in distracting traffic situations. Pull off the road.
- If you have to make a 9-1-1 call, be prepared to give the dispatcher what they need, such as street name, building number (if you are in this type of area), and any other information that makes it easier to locate.
- Use your voice mail to take messages. Do not take notes while driving.
- Disconnect your phone when using jumper cables: It is possible to have a power surge and burn up your phone.

****Calling 9-1-1****

Police tell us that we shouldn't use 9-1-1 from our cell phone except in true emergencies, such as:

- Unreported conditions
- Any life threatening events
- Any crime against you or another person
- A vehicle or object blocking traffic lanes
- A suspected drunk driver

Do not use 911 from your cell phone for situations such as:

- A stalled vehicle
- A stalled vehicle that is not a hazard
- Winter road conditions
- A stolen vehicle when nothing is known about the suspected thief
- Asking for directions
- Testing your phone

If you do make a call from your cell phone, it will be routed to the appropriate emergency response authority. You should be prepared to provide:

- ~ The exact location of the vehicle in distress
- ~ Nature of the emergency
- ~ Your name and cell phone number with the area code

At the end of 2008, CITA-The Wireless Association estimated that 270 million people - about 90 percent of the U.S. population had cell phones. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2007, estimated that at any time of the day 11 percent of the population used their cell phones while driving.

In a March 2009 *USA Today* article it was quoted that there are 250 bills in 42 states pending to prohibit or restrict cell phone use while driving. This is up from 120 bills 10 months earlier. The states of Georgia, Idaho, North Carolina and Texas are considering banning all types of cell phone use while driving, including hands-free devices.

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Excerpts: www.statefarm.com

www.usatoday.com

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