



Friends & Clients Newsletter

Cell Phones and Driving

By: Lara Greco

What are the chances you'll be involved in an accident if you're talking on a cell phone while driving?

According to the *California Highway Patrol*, cell phones were the second-leading cause of accidents in southern California. A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* indicates that drivers talking on cell phones are **four times** more likely to be involved in an accident than those who don't. It also concluded that the relative risk was similar to that of driving with a blood-alcohol level at the legal limit.

Now you ask are cell phones dangerous? The National Highway Safety Administration estimates

that 20-30% of **ALL** motor vehicle accidents are due to driver inattention—that is around 4,300 accidents a day.

There are four (4) basic driver distractions:

First is visual-looking away from the road. Next time you're at a traffic light look at the people on either side of you, if they're on a cell phone notice how they tilt their head to one side and tend to look down instead of straight ahead.

Second is biomechanical—this includes such things as dialing the phone or adjusting the radio or CD player.

Third is auditory—such as being startled by the ringing of a phone.

Fourth being cognitive or

aware. Being “lost in thought” or focused on a conversation with someone causes us to withdraw from situational responses.

Many people ask “how is talking on the telephone different than carrying on a conversation with a passenger in the car? There are two basic differences:

The first is both parties in the same care have an immediate feel for the flow of traffic or the changing of road conditions and can discontinue the conversation when conditions get too hectic, where as the person on the other end can not.

Second is that cell phone use seems to carry a certain obligation of immediacy.

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Protecting Yourself From The Flu

By: Katie Carse

An estimated 5 to 20% of U.S. residents catch the flu each year, and an average of 36,000 deaths are a result. Influenza (“the flu”) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus. Symptoms include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore

throat, runny nose and muscle aches. Children, more commonly than adults, suffer from gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

The most frequent way the influenza virus spreads is from person to person in

respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This occurs when an infected person coughs or sneezes and those droplets are propelled, up to three feet, through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. A

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“Learn the art of patience. Apply discipline to your thoughts when they become anxious over the outcome of a goal. Impatience breeds anxiety, fear, discouragement and failure. Patience creates confidence, decisiveness, and a rational outlook, which eventually leads to success.”

by: Brian Adams

Cell Phones and Driving, continued

When the phone rings, regardless of the road conditions, we feel that it has to be answered immediately, becoming focused on the ringing and losing a large part of their awareness of what is happening outside.

How do we know that cell phones contribute to motor vehicle accidents?

A study done by the California Highway Patrol "Report to the Governor and Legislature," found that the largest number of accidents were attributed to cell phone use (11%), followed by radio/CD (9%), children (4%), eating (3%) and reading (2%).

The cognitive resources required to carry on a telephone conversation are the same as those required to drive. Thus, when the two tasks are performed simultaneously, a cognitive load is placed on the driver, which may impact on performance of either or both activities. Thus the drivers' reduced ability to assess and respond to unexpected situations increases this risk.

Is this problem unique to the United

States?

No! The use of cell phone while vehicle is in motion has already been banned in Australia, Spain, Israel, Portugal, Italy, Brazil, Chile, Switzerland, Great Britain, Singapore, Taiwan, Sweden, Japan, and Austria. After a study done in Japan that found that traffic accidents related to cell phones, increased by 11 percent; after the ban it fell by about 75 percent.

Are employers liable for damages as a result of vehicle accidents where their employees are using company phones and/or conducting company business? If the person is involved in an accident during the scope of their employment, there is liability on the part of the employer.

Driving safely can be challenging enough even when full attention is given to the road and its potential hazards.

Here are some suggestions that you can do in making the road safer while using your cell phone:

- Only dial your phone when the car

is not in motion.

- Never take notes or write down numbers. Rather, pull off the road to a safe spot.
- If traffic conditions warrant your undivided attention, let calls go to your voicemail or activate call forwarding.
- Do not engage in stressful or emotional conversations.
- Always avoid text messaging while driving.
- Position your phone where it is easy to see or reach.

According to Pemco Insurance "The best way to reduce distraction while driving is simply to not use a cell phone, if you must use a cell phone while driving, pull over before making or answering a call, or use a hands-free device to reduce distraction."

If you are interested in obtaining more information about cell phones and driving safety, you can visit your local wireless store, write your Politicians, or simply just going online.

Protecting Yourself From The Flu, continued

less frequent way the virus

spreads is when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or objects and then touches their own nose or mouth before washing their hands.

On October 5, 2004 the Center for Disease Control was notified by Chiron Corporation that it would not be able to distribute the anticipated influenza vaccine this year due to its license being suspended for three months by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency. Chiron Corporation was expected to deliver half the influenza vaccine to the United States this year.

Due to the reduction of the flu shot available the Center for Disease Control recommends the following groups receive priority for flu shots:

All children aged 6-23 months

Adults age 65 years and older

Persons aged 2-64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions

All whom who will be pregnant during the influenza flu season

Residents of nursing homes and long term care facilities

Children 6-18 months on chronic aspirin therapy

Healthcare workers involved in direct patient care

Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged <6 months.

If you are not included in the above listed priority groups you are being asked to

"An estimated 5% to 20% of U.S. residents catch the flu each year"

forego your flu shot this season. The Center for Disease Control suggests you practice the following healthy habits to prevent yourself from the flu and spreading the flu:

Avoid close contact with those who are sick or others when you are sick.

Stay at home when you are sick, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.

Wash your hands often to protect yourself from germs, avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

To learn more about the flu and receive additional information contact the Center for Disease Control at 800-232-2522 or visit their website at www.cdc.gov.

Halloween is meant to be spooky and fun but it's also important to keep it safe for your children, your friends and yourself.

A simple ghost costume made from an ordinary bed sheet can be consumed by flames if ignited. Purchase only flame-retardant costumes and masks. And be sure costumes fit properly to prevent tripping and falling. Masks should allow full vision.

If trick-or-treating door-to-door, wear something reflective, carry a flashlight and travel in groups for safety. Keep

well off the streets and remove masks before crossing the streets. Better yet, have a spooky party and stay in with your friends.

Check all treats carefully before eating them. Report anything suspicious. Instead of a candle to light a jack-o-lantern, use a small flashlight or a liquid light that glows for several hours after you bend it.

Never use combustible materials in a haunted house, especially styrofoam and other plastics, gauze type materials and other loose flammables such as

quickly cause the spread of fire. This situation can be especially dangerous when the fire starts in a confined space such as the dark interior of a haunted house display.

Haunted house operators should be careful not to block exits for fire escape and emergency lighting systems must remain in operable condition. Fire escapes also should be clearly marked. People with questions on what materials are acceptable for use in putting up a haunted house display should contact their local fire department.



THANKSGIVING DAY WORD SEARCH

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 S X A A M U H O M E N R A L R L T O T D
 Z I M Y M I L U K U R P M E I I U R Q M
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 V G K C N L U G B S S U H T N A M Q U T
 C I N I J T O N L E D I A I D F Y H Z A
 N R A I Q D A W O I A A K F S S L Z N R
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| APPLE | AUTUMN | BLESSINGS |
| CELEBRATE | COLONIAL | CORN |
| CRANBERRY | CROPS | FAMILY |
| FRIENDS | GRATITUDE | MAYFLOWER |
| NOVEMBER | PILGRIMS | PLENTIFUL |
| PLYMOUTH | POTATOES | PUMPKIN |
| STUFFING | THURSDAY | TURKEY |
| YAMS | | |

“Ol’ Tyme Lawyer”

It seems archaic that there was a time that one area code might cover several hundred miles of territory, or that there might only be one doctor or lawyer to an entire town or community. Even stranger still is the concept that a doctor or lawyer might make house calls, or even give free advice. But, it really was that way at one time. Now we live in a world where professionals seem unwilling to go the extra mile for you. We’ve set out to change that way of business.

Recently, we started our “Preferred Client” program, whereby clients could register to be given a discount on their future legal needs. They could also call or come by for a free consultation on their legal concerns. Thank you to all of you who took advantage of this opportunity. But I want to let you know that we are trying harder than that to be your “Ol’ Tyme Lawyer”.

If you know friends or relatives that need assistance, feel free to give them our information, no matter how far away they may be. I have driven as far South as Lake Jackson, as far East as Jefferson, as far West as Graham, and as far North as Gainesville to represent Texans in their injury claims. If you or someone you know needs help, we are here for all of you.

