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Distracted Driving: It Can Wait



Distracted driving is any activity that diverts your attention from driving. This includes eating or drinking, talking to others in your vehicle or adjusting your radio, entertainment or navigations systems. Texting or talking on a cell phone has become one of

the biggest causes of distracted driving over the last several years and many states have taken measures to decrease this type of behavior.

Connecticut law prohibits the use of any hand-held mobile electronic device while operating a motor vehicle (with certain emergency and emergency personnel exceptions). Drivers who are 16 or 17 years of age are prohibited from using a cell phone or mobile device at any time even with a hands-free accessory.

Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for five seconds. At 55 miles per hour, that is the equivalent of driving the length of a football field with your eyes closed.

The Facts

- Between 2012-2017, nearly 20,000 people died in crashes involving a distracted driver.
- There were 3,166 people killed in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers in 2017. While this reflects a nine percent decrease from 2016, there is still much work to be done. In the last six years, 9.5 percent of all fatal crashes involved a distracted driver.
- Texting while driving has become an especially problematic trend among younger drivers. In 2017, eight percent of people killed in teen (15-19) driving crashes died when the teen drivers were distracted at the time of the crashes.

Safe Driving Tips

- If you are expecting a text message or need to send one, pull over and park your car in a safe location. Once you are safely off the road and parked, it is safe to text.
- Designate your passenger as your “designated texter.” Allow them access to your phone to respond to calls or messages.
- Do not engage in social media scrolling or messaging while driving. Cell phone use can be habit-forming. Struggling to not text and drive? Put the cell phone in the trunk, glove box, or back seat of the vehicle until you arrive at your destination.

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)



SAVE THE DATE: EHS LAB SAFETY EXPO

Yale Environmental Health and Safety will host a Lab Safety Expo at various locations throughout campus on the dates listed below:

- **Tuesday, October 8th**, 10:00 am-2:00 pm, Harkness Lounge, 367 Cedar Street.
- **Thursday, October 17th**, 10:00 am-2:00 pm, YSB Auditorium Lobby, 260 Whitney Avenue
- **Tuesday, October 22nd**, 10:00 am-2:00 pm, West Campus Conference Center, 800 West Campus Drive, West Haven

The expo will feature EHS exhibits and demonstrations including EHS Integrator, PPE, Ergonomics, Waste Management, Biosafety Cabinets vs. Fume Hoods, Emergency Response Procedures and Laser Safety.

EHS will be joined by our partner departments including the Affinity Groups, Office of Emergency Management, Office of Public Safety and Yale Fire Code Compliance.

Free giveaways and raffle prizes throughout each event.

Morning refreshments and lunch will be provided.

For more information, contact ehs@yale.edu.

Yale EHS

Prevent Slips, Trips and Falls



Each year, the first full week of the fall season is dedicated to helping prevent falls. Fall Prevention Awareness Week takes place September 23rd-29th and serves as a reminder for both young and old just how common fall-related injuries are while offering up tips to prevent falls.

Older people (those 65 and older) are at greater risk of being injured due to a fall and while many falls do not cause injury, roughly 20 percent cause a serious injury such as a broken bone or head injury, according to the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC). Each year, at least 300,000 older people are hospitalized for hip fractures as a result of a fall, accounting for more than 95 percent of all hip fractures.

Most falls are caused by a combination of risk factors including lower body weakness, difficulty balancing, vision problems and home hazards such as broken or uneven steps or clutter.

The CDC has provided the following safety tips for older people to help reduce their risk of fall-related injuries:

- Ask your healthcare provider to evaluate your risk for falling and talk with them about specific things you can do. Also, discuss your medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, to see if they are making you dizzy or sleepy.
- Engage in exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance.
- Have your eyes checked at least once a year and update your eyeglasses, if needed.
- Make your home safer by removing trip hazards, adding grab bars inside and outside of your tub or shower, adding railings to both sides of the stairs and ensuring your home is well lit.

Fall Prevention for Children

Falls are the leading cause of non-fatal injuries for children 19 and younger. Every day, around 8,000 children are treated in emergency rooms for fall-related injuries. Many of these injuries are the result of falls on the playground.

The CDC has provided the following safety tips for children to help reduce their risk of fall-related injuries:

- Check that surfaces under playground equipment are safe, soft and consist of appropriate materials such as wood chips or sand, not dirt or grass.
- Use home safety devices such as guards on windows above ground level, stair gates and guard rails.
- Ensure your child is wearing the appropriate protective gear during sports and recreation.
- Supervise young children at all times around fall hazards such as stairs and playground equipment, whether in your own home or out to play.

Click [here](#) for more information from the CDC on fall prevention.

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"Safety is as simple as ABC-Always Be Careful." - Unknown

Smoke Alarms Save Lives



**FIRE
PREVENTION
WEEK**

Roughly three out of five fire-related fatalities occur in homes without smoke alarms or where the smoke alarms are not working properly, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). National Fire Prevention Week (October 6-12) is a perfect time to review the fire prevention measures in your home.

Ensuring you have working smoke alarms installed in your home can give you and your family an early warning to get out of the house quickly. The following tips are provided by the NFPA. Visit nfpa.org for more information.

Choose Your Type

- There are two kinds of smoke alarms. Ionization smoke alarms are quicker to warn about flaming fires while photoelectric alarms are quicker to warn about smoldering fires. It is best to use both types in your home.
- It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- Special smoke alarms are available for the hearing impaired. These alarms have strobe lights and bed shakers.

Location

- Install smoke alarms inside and outside of each bedroom and sleeping area along with in the basement.
- On levels without bedrooms, install alarms in the living room, den or family room, near the stairway to the upper level or in both locations.
- Smoke alarms should be installed at least 10 feet from a cooking appliance to minimize false alarms when cooking.
- Mount smoke alarms high on walls or ceilings. Wall-mounted alarms should be installed not more than 12 inches away from the ceiling.

Maintenance

- Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button.
- Smoke alarms with non-replaceable 10-year batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. If the alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm right away.
- Smoke alarms with any other type of battery need a new battery at least once a year. If that alarm chirps, warning the battery is low, replace the battery right away. A good reminder is to replace the battery on all smoke alarms when Daylight Saving Time begins.