



Title: **More than cellphones can district drivers**  
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## More than cellphones can district drivers

Distractions contribute to hundreds of vehicle crashes each year causing property damage, personal injury, even death. The Illinois Insurance Association and its member companies unite with local and state officials to bring attention to this pervasive issue during “Distracted Driving Awareness Month.”

Almost everyone has a mobile device these days and feels compelled to check messages regularly. Cellphones are a top driving distraction, but there are others. Looking at something or someone inside or outside the vehicle causes drivers to take eyes off the road. Manual distractions like changing the radio station, adjusting temperature, eating and drinking take hands off the steering wheel. Daydreaming and conversing with passengers take thoughts off the task at hand.

Drivers can minimize distractions by implementing these strategies:

- Always buckle children and crate pets.
- Adjust climate, seat position, mirrors, music, and mapping before putting the car in gear.
- Secure loose items to avoid reaching for anything.
- Be well-rested, alert, and ready to respond to hazards, deteriorating conditions, and nearby vehicles.
- Follow distracted driving laws.

Handheld cellphones and other electronic communications are prohibited en route.

Distracted driving jeopardizes personal safety and makes roadways dangerous. Keep eyes on the road; hands on the steering wheel; and thoughts on driving. Avoid multi-tasking behind the wheel. Decide to curtail driving distractions every time you slide into the driver’s seat!

**Kevin Martin**

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