

JANUARY *Safety Talk*

Topic: Driver Distractions

Driving is a job that requires your full attention every time you get behind the wheel. Any secondary activity will detract from your ability to drive properly and safely. You must reduce distractions and focus on your driving.

There are a number of possible driver distractions, including:

- ◆ Using devices such as GPS systems, stereos, CD and DVD players, radios, cell phones, laptops, PDA's and MP3 players
- ◆ Reading maps, directions or other material
- ◆ Grooming (combing hair, putting on make-up or shaving)



- ◆ Eating or drinking
- ◆ Taking notes
- ◆ Talking with passengers
- ◆ Tending to children or pets
- ◆ Adjusting the controls in your vehicle (radio, CD player or climate control)

- ◆ Visual distractions outside your vehicle, such as collisions or police activity
- ◆ Fatigue, impacting cognitive thinking and reaction time



Careless driving is a serious offence. Police can charge drivers with careless driving if drivers do not pay full attention to their driving. If you are convicted of careless driving, you will get demerit points and can be fined and in some cases sentenced to jail time. Your licence may also be suspended.

Tips to reduce driver distractions:

- ◆ Do not get behind the wheel of a vehicle if you are fatigued.
- ◆ Attend to personal grooming and plan your route before you leave.
- ◆ Identify and preset your vehicle's climate control, radio and CD player.

- ◆ Make it a habit to pull over and park to use your cell phone or have a passenger take the call or let it go to voice mail.
- ◆ Put reading material in the trunk if you are tempted to read.
- ◆ Do not engage in emotional or complex conversations. Stress can affect your driving performance.
- ◆ When you are hungry or thirsty, take a break from driving.



Remember to focus on your driving at all times. A split-second distraction behind the wheel can result in injury or even death.