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# CAGC SAFETY ALERT

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## **Distracted Driving**

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**Restrictions from the Distracted Driving Legislation:**

It restricts drivers from:

- using hand-held cell phones
- texting or e-mailing (even when stopped at red lights)
- using electronic devices like laptop computers, video games, cameras, video entertainment displays and programming portable audio players (e.g., MP3 players)
- entering information on GPS units
- reading printed materials in the vehicle
- writing, printing or sketching
- personal grooming (brushing and flossing teeth, putting on makeup, curling hair, clipping nails or shaving)

However, it also covers:

Traffic Safety Act 115(2)(i) - allows police to charge a driver who permits anything, including a pet, to occupy the front seat of the vehicle such that it interferes with the driver's access to the vehicle controls and the safe operation of the vehicle.

Traffic Safety Act 115(2)(j) - allows police to charge a driver who permits anything, including a pet, to cause any obstruction to the driver's clear vision in any direction.

**Problems with Distracted Driving:**

Distracted driving reduces awareness, decision-making and performance leading to increased risk of driver error and subsequent collisions. Using electronics while driving is a serious distraction because it requires visual, manual and cognitive attention from the driver.

**Below are stats specific to distracted driving in Alberta:**

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- Between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015, there were 27,417, an increase of 1504 from the previous year.
- The penalty for distracted driving is \$287 with the newly added penalty of three demerit points (effective Jan 1, 2016).
- Offences and convictions on and after January 1, 2016 will appear on commercial driver abstracts and carrier profiles
- 97 per cent of these convictions were for using a hand-held electronic device while driving.
- Research indicates that driver distraction contributes to 20 to 30 per cent of all collisions.
- Distracted drivers are three times more likely to be involved in a collision than attentive drivers.
- During 2014-15, male drivers account for two-thirds of all convictions.
- Young male drivers, age 22 to 34 years, have the highest conviction rates.

**More information on Distracted Driving:**

<http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/DistractedDriving.htm>

[http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/documents/Distracted\\_Driving\\_FAQ\\_Dec\\_10.pdf](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/documents/Distracted_Driving_FAQ_Dec_10.pdf)