



State of New Hampshire Insurance Department

21 South Fruit Street, Suite 14
Concord, NH 03301
603-271-2261

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Andrew Demers,
Communications Director
603-271-3781
communications@ins.nh.gov

New Hampshire Departments of Insurance and Safety Remind Granite Staters That April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

*Use of Electronic Devices While Driving is Dangerous and Prohibited by State
Hands-Free Law*

CONCORD, NH (April 7, 2022) – As April is designated “National Distracted Driving Awareness Month”, the New Hampshire Insurance Department (NHID) and Department of Safety (DOS) are reminding Granite Staters that distracted driving – including the use of electronic devices – is dangerous, illegal and costly.

According to the New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety, there have been 42 fatal crashes with distraction or inattention as the primary causation from 2014 through 2020. It is estimated that in 2020, distracted driving accounted for as much as 30% of all crashes throughout New Hampshire, and the use of portable electronic mobile devices accounted for an average of 11% of those distraction related crashes.

“Distracted driving is dangerous and irresponsible. If you’re using your phone while driving, then you’re not driving,” said New Hampshire State Police Captain Christopher Vetter, Commander of the Office of Highway Safety. “Your eyes need to stay on the road, your hands on the wheel, and your focus on driving. Put your phone away when you get behind the wheel – it will save your life and the lives of those around you.”

NH RSA 265:79-c specifically prohibits the use of “any hand-held mobile electronic device capable of providing voice or data communication” while driving or stopped in traffic. This includes mobile phones as well as navigation systems.



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“Distracted driving is extremely dangerous. It’s not only a potentially deadly endeavor, it can be costly to insurance consumers, as well,” said New Hampshire Insurance Commissioner Christopher Nicolopoulos. “In addition to the resulting fines, consumers may see a significant increase in their insurance premiums if they receive a distracted driving ticket. We urge Granite Staters to drive safely and avoid any distractions when they’re behind the wheel.”

In New Hampshire, fines for distracted driving tickets range from \$100 plus penalty assessment for a first offense, \$250 plus penalty assessment for a second offense and \$500 plus penalty assessment for any subsequent offense within a 24-month period.

“Safety should be the number one concern for drivers on New Hampshire’s roadways – for themselves, their passengers and their fellow citizens,” said Department of Safety Assistant Commissioner Eddie Edwards. “Our message is simple: It is illegal and potentially deadly to use an electronic device while you’re operating a motor vehicle. Stay focused on safe vehicle operation and wait to talk or text until you’re at your destination.”

Beginning Thursday, April 7, 2022, the New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety and local law enforcement partners will take part in “Connect 2 Disconnect”, a national distracted driving enforcement and awareness initiative. The goals of this initiative are to demonstrate a commitment to enforcing texting laws and to reduce traffic crashes caused by distracted drivers, ultimately preventing injuries and deaths associated with cell phone use and texting while driving.

“As we kick off National Distracted Driving Month, AAA wants to remind drivers about the importance of focusing on the road ahead and not on their smartphones,” said Daniel Goodman, Public Affairs Manager at AAA Northern New England. “Help reduce the number of these preventable tragedies by putting down your phone – because lives depend on it. Just like you wouldn’t drive intoxicated, don’t drive intexticated.”

The New Hampshire Insurance Department Can Help



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The New Hampshire Insurance Department's mission is to promote and protect the public good by ensuring the existence of a safe and competitive insurance marketplace through the development and enforcement of the insurance laws of the State of New Hampshire. Contact us with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your insurance coverage at 1-800-852-3416 or (603) 271-2261, or by email at consumerservices@ins.nh.gov. For more information, visit <https://www.nh.gov/insurance>.

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