



**LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE**  
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**April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month:  
LHSC urges drivers to keep eyes and attention on the road**

During National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, The Louisiana Highway Safety Commission reminds drivers that driving while talking or texting with a handheld device is not only illegal in Louisiana but can have deadly consequences.

Distracted driving is one of the most common yet underreported traffic safety issues in Louisiana. Law enforcement officers often cannot attribute a crash to a distraction, and drivers involved in a crash usually are reluctant to admit they were distracted.

A recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration report says eight percent of fatal crashes and 13 percent of injury crashes in the U.S. in 2023 were the result of distracted driving. The report says 3,275 people were killed and 324,819 were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers.

The report also says 611 non-occupants, including pedestrians and bicyclists, were killed in 2023 in distracted driving crashes.

LHSC partners with NHTSA in April for National Distracted Driving Awareness Month to bring awareness to a problem that has escalated over the years as mobile phone usage has become ubiquitous, LHSC Executive Director Lisa Freeman said.

“Distraction comes in many forms, but phone usage is at the top of the list,” she said. “Louisiana drivers need to know that it is now illegal to use a handheld phone to text, make or receive calls.”

The law, passed in 2025, does allow a driver to talk on the phone with a hands-free speaker or single earbud and microphone, Freeman said. Still, it is safer for a driver not to use a phone while driving, she said.

“Distracted driving is not just about what your hands are doing, it’s about where your attention is,” Freeman said. “We all think we are great at multi-tasking, but the truth is if you are in a conversation with someone, either on the phone or in the car, your attention is not 100 percent on the road.”

Freeman offered some phone-free driving tips for drivers:

- Park the car in a safe location before using the phone to send or read a text message.
- Ask a passenger to be the “designated texter” to manage calls and messages during the drive.
- Use “Do Not Disturb” mode on the phone to silence notifications.
- Silence the phone and place it in the glove box.

For more information on distracted driving, visit [NHTSA.gov/DistractedDriving](https://www.nhtsa.gov/DistractedDriving). Para obtener información sobre conducción distraída en español, visite <https://www.nhtsa.gov/es/conducir-riesgoso/distraccion>.

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