Distracted driving

Background

Driver distraction is one of the leading causes of traffic accidents. With the popularity of cellular devices, texting, talking and e-mailing on the go are increasingly becoming factors in collisions. Offences can result in fines and demerit points, or more serious charges based on the applicable legislation.

Statistics

- Driver distraction is a factor in about 4 million motor vehicle crashes in North America each year.
- Taking your eyes off the road for even just two seconds doubles your risk of being in a collision.
- Drivers who use cell phones are four times more likely to be involved in a collision than those who are focused on the road.
- Other distractions include eating, drinking, smoking, reading, applying makeup, watching objects outside the vehicle, adjusting controls, and programming navigational devices.

Prevention

- Leave plenty of time to get to your destination.
- Pre-program your route on your GPS device.
- Listen to your GPS device; don't look at it.
- Put any reading materials or distracting objects away in the trunk.
- Allow calls to go to voicemail. If you must make or take a call, pull over and park at a safe location.
- “Leave the Phone Alone!” – an implementable slogan.

References:

Paying Attention to Driver Distraction – Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety