

New state distracted driving law takes effect in October

Written by Australian Business

September 14, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- New Haven county residents will soon be facing tougher laws regarding [distracted driving](#) , especially when it comes to the use of cell phones in the car. According to the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, in the amount of time it takes to send or read an average text, a car travelling at 55 miles per hour would actually travel the distance of a football field in length--but with the driver essentially blindfolded.

If that sounds like a recipe for disaster, you are right. [Car accidents](#) can easily happen in those few seconds. That is why Connecticut legislators are cracking down on those who text or use a phone while driving.

The new Connecticut law

This July, Gov. Malloy signed a new law that will take effect on October 1, 2013 expanding the previous distracted driving laws and increasing fines for offenders. The basics of the new law are:- Texting while driving is banned for all drivers at all times- Handheld use of a cell phone to make or receive calls is banned for drivers 18 years of age or older- Drivers under the age of 18 are prohibited from any use of a cell phone while behind the wheel- School bus drivers are banned from any cell phone use while driving- The use of any video games or DVD players is prohibited for all drivers

Fines to drivers caught breaking the new law will increase as well. First-time offenders can expect to pay \$150 for their ticket. For a second offense, the fine will be \$300 and for a third or more offense, the fee will be \$500. In addition, the law allows for distracted driving citations to be reported to drivers' insurance companies. This poses the risk of increased insurance premiums for convicted drivers.

What exactly is "distracted driving"?

While the new law focuses primarily on texting and cell phone use, it is important to note that many other distractions can lead to accidents as well. Any activity that removes a driver's attention, and especially eyes, from the road is a potential distraction.

Using a phone, reading or programming a GPS unit, applying makeup, eating and drinking and

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more can all ultimately prevent a driver from properly focusing on the important task at hand and can lead to serious consequences.

Victims of distracted driving accidents

Any accident can happen in the flash of an eye. If you are involved in a motor vehicle accident with a distracted driver, you should be sure to work with an attorney who knows the laws and can work for you.

Article provided by Law Office of Mark DellaValle Visit us at www.dellavallelaw.com