

Distracted Driving Awareness

April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Distracted driving fatality rates are increasing each year. According to the NHTSA, there were 3,308 killed in 2022 from distracted driving. As we drive down the road or are working on the road, we see distracted drivers all the time: texting, eating, applying makeup, and changing up the music on the radio are all distractions.

Here are a few tips to help you drive safely:

- **Do not text or make calls while you drive:** If a phone call needs to take place, it is safest to pull off the road in a safe area and make a call. There are some cell phone services that you can put your phone on Do Not Disturb while driving. If you receive a call or text, the caller/sender will receive a text saying you are driving and will respond when it is safe to do so.
- **Avoid other drivers who are on the phone:** If you are driving, try to maintain a safe distance from other drivers you believe are distracted. This could lower the chances of an accident.
- **Do not eat and drive:** It seems like a time saving way to eat breakfast or lunch, but you are losing focus of what is going on around you. If you spill a drink or your food, this could also cause additional distractions. Do not let anything take your attention off the road.
- **Avoid drowsy driving:** Drowsy driving increases accident rates. If you are tired, you need to pull over to get some sleep before getting back on the road. This isn't a time to drive faster to make it home. Get rest, then finish your trip home safely.
- **Secure children before driving:** Be sure to buckle your children in before you get your car on the road. There may be times they become fussy or screaming, but it is best to pull off in a safe area to settle the child. Reaching into the backseat to soothe your child is distracting and can make it difficult to keep the car under control.