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MTPD to crack down on distracted driving

Distracted Driving Blitz in April

The Miami Township Police Department is partnering with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to keep drivers safe on area roadways. The MTPD will focus on distracted driving violations throughout the month of April.

The *Distracted Driving Blitz* is funded through the Ohio Safety Grant awarded to the Miami Township Police Department in 2022 by the NHTSA. It allows officers to focus more attention on reducing traffic crashes, increasing OVI patrols and participating in national safety campaigns.

"Anytime motorists get behind the wheel, focusing on the road should be their only priority," Sgt. James McCarty, Miami Township Police Department, said. "Anything that takes your attention away from driving can be deadly, whether it be texting, eating or drinking, adjusting the radio, applying makeup, anything that takes their eyes off the road."

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The NHTSA and MTPD offer this advice to avoid distracted driving:

- Turn off electronic devices and put them out of reach before starting to drive.
- Be good role models for young drivers and set a good example. Talk with your teens about responsible driving.
- Speak up when a driver uses an electronic device behind the wheel. Offer to make the call for the driver, so his or her full attention stays on the road.
- Always wear your seat belt. Seat belts are your best defense against unsafe drivers.
- Be alert for pedestrians and cyclists, especially those who may themselves be distracted.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol reports 73,945 distracted driving crashes in Ohio since 2017. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed a law in January that allows officers to pull over and cite anyone they see using a cell phone or other electronic device while driving.

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