

## Safety Moment – Distracted Driving

Motor Vehicle accidents are the #1 claims made (19% of all claims made) and #1 \$ paid out (almost \$50 million dollars). Please review this information with your committee and leaders on your unit levels. We also encourage you to include the Traffic Safety merit badge as a merit badge offering to your Scouts this coming year.



### **SUMMARY**

Distracted driving is considered “any activity that diverts the driver’s attention away from driving,” according to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration. The distractions can include a wide range of a driver’s or passenger’s personal actions or activities while in a vehicle. Even if a driver is only trying to keep Scouts in their seats while the vehicle is in motion, that is a distraction.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **Potentially Deadly Consequences**

Distracted driving can have deadly consequences. On average, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nine people in the U.S. are killed every day and more than 1,000 are injured in crashes involving a distracted driver.

#### **Preventing Distractions**

BSA’s Risk Zone: Vehicle webpage, “[Transporting Scouts Safely](#),” identifies some best practices to observe in minimizing or eliminating distractions while driving:

- When you get in a vehicle, put away your cellphone/smartphone so you won’t be tempted to look at or answer it.
- Turn the phone to “silent” or “off.”
- Only check your phone messages during rest stops or food breaks.
- If you must use the phone, pull off the road and to a safe location.
- Do not call or send messages while you are driving or to others you know are driving.

## **Setting Individual and Unit Examples**

When a driver or a passenger sets an example, they are telling other adults and youth that they are choosing to drive, or help others drive, safely and not put lives at risk. Maybe your unit can come up with a catchy phrase that will help remind everyone to drive distraction-free before each trip. You can also access some short, attention-getting videos to help reinforce this message within your unit.

And finally, be committed to driver safety: join the National Safety Council, along with thousands of others as they make the pledge to “be an attentive driver.” Visit the [NSC website](#) and make your pledge.

### **RESOURCES**

- [National Safety Council—Distracted Driving: Calls Kill](#)
- [U.S. Department of Transportation—OMG! Distracted Driving PSA](#)
- [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—Distracted Driving](#)
- [The BSA Risk Zone: Vehicle—Transporting Scouts Safely](#)
- [ATT.com—Texting and Driving: It Can Wait \(fact sheet\)](#)