

The Scarborough Police Department is committed to ensuring that motorist traveling on the roads of Scarborough can do so in the safest manner possible. There are many external human elements that cannot be controlled which often result in a motor vehicle crash. Our goal is to help reduce these external elements by way of proactively patrolling and enforcing motor vehicle laws with specific consideration to Distracted Driving. The proactive enforcement of motor vehicle laws will ultimately reduce the amount of motor vehicle crashes which is the ultimate goal of traffic enforcement.

On September 19th, 2019, LD165 will take effect in the State of Maine. This law will restrict one of these distracted driving elements. LD165 is commonly known as “Hands Free Driving”. More can be found on this law under M.R.S.A. Title 29-A ss. 2121-USE OF MOBILE TELEPHONES AND HANDHELD ELECTRONIC DEVICES WHILE OPERATING MOTOR VEHICLES PROHIBITED. **1. Prohibition.** A person may not operate a motor vehicle on a public way while using, manipulating, talking into or otherwise interacting with a handheld electronic device or mobile telephone, including but not limited to the use of a handheld electronic device or mobile telephone while the vehicle is temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic light or a stop sign. (Please read full law for additional information)

With any new law, there are many questions that are asked. The Scarborough Police Department encourages everyone to look up this law and read and understand all the parts of it. Below is an overview of some answers to frequently asked questions about this law.

Can an operator have a phone conversation while holding the phone? NO

Can an operator answer an incoming call while operating? Only if you are using a hands free option, and do not have to hold the phone while manipulating it.

Can an operator have a phone conversation through a headset, speaker or Bluetooth? Yes, as you long as you are over 18 years of age and not operating on a permit or intermediate license.

Can an operator use the electronic device while at a red light or stop sign? NO.

Even if it is resting on a dashboard or other mount? NO

When can I use my electronic device while operating a motor vehicle? In cases of emergency, operators may use an electronic device to call law enforcement or other emergency services only.

Other laws pertaining to Distracted Driving are still in Effect. M.R.S.A 29-A ss 2119-Texting While Operating still restricts operators from reading any electronic communication from an electronic device. M.R.S.A. 29-A ss 2118 Failure to Maintain Control of a Motor Vehicle restricts operators from engaging in activity not necessary to the operation of a motor vehicle.

Please help be part of the solution with Distracted Driving. Become educated, and help educate others on Distracted Driving. Help reduce the risk of a motor vehicle crash by compliance with these laws. The Officers at the Scarborough Police Department will be visible and work diligently to enforce these laws and make the Town of Scarborough a safer Community.

Any questions on this article or about Distracted Driving, please contact Sgt. Timothy Barker at 207-730-4304.