

Distracted Driving Action Plan 2019 - 2021



CONTENTS

Disclaimer Statement	1
Introduction	2
Goals	3
Strategies	3-6
Acronyms.....	7
Acknowledgements	7

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DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

This document has been prepared by the members of the Distracted Driving Action Team (DDAT). It is considered a living document, and is a compilation of activities and initiatives to address distracted driving in the state of Michigan.

The Action Team is part of a network of ad hoc committees comprised of local, state, federal, and private partners, working in collaboration with the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission (GTSAC) to identify traffic safety challenges and comprehensive solutions. The result of these efforts will support achievement of the mission, vision, and goals identified in the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). While the strategies identified in the State's SHSP have been approved by the GTSAC, the activities and initiatives identified in this Action Plan, as well as any opinions or conclusions expressed, are those of the individual Action Team member agencies and not necessarily those of the GTSAC.

INTRODUCTION

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI), driver inattention is the leading factor in most crashes and near-crashes. NHTSA reports 3,477 people were killed and 391,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers during 2015. Distraction-related crashes may be even higher because pre-crash distractions often leave no evidence to observe, and drivers are reluctant to admit to being distracted following a crash.

The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) defines distracted driving as any non-driving activity a person engages in that has the potential to distract him or her from the primary task of driving and increase the risk of crashing. Driver distractions include:

- Using a cell phone and/or texting
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a PDA or navigation system
- Watching a video
- Changing the radio station, CD, or MP3 player
- Loud music

Since text messaging requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the most alarming distraction. As of late 2015, Michigan was one of 47 states to ban text messaging for all drivers. Michigan also prohibits cell phone use for newly licensed drivers, specifically those with a Level 1 or Level 2 license.

According to DOT's distraction.gov website:

- Physically dialing a phone while driving increases the risk of a crash as much as six times. (VTTI)
- Texting is riskier, increasing the collision risk by 23 times. (VTTI)
- Studies show that when a driver looks away from the road to send a text or e-mail message, he or she is concentrating on something other than the road for 4.6 of every six seconds. (VTTI)
 - At 55 miles per hour, that is like driving the length of a football field while blindfolded.

NHTSA reports that during daylight hours, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones while driving. That creates enormous potential for deaths and injuries on U.S. roads. Teens are the largest age group reported as distracted at the time of fatal crashes.

In Michigan, the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) reported the number of distracted driving crashes increased to **7,516 in 2015. NHTSA reports a drop of 2.2% in 2016.**

- Fatalities attributed to distracted driving rose from 14 in 2014 to 28 in 2015.
- Injury crashes attributed to distracted driving rose from 1,676 in 2014 to 2,349 in 2015.
- Crashes attributed to cell phone use rose from 666 in 2014 to 753 in 2015.

GOALS

1. A reduction of injuries and fatalities caused by distracted driving.
2. Increase distracted driving awareness.
3. Increase distracted driving enforcement.
4. Improve the accuracy of distracted driving crash statistics.
5. Annually track Michigan driver hand-held cell phone use, including talking and texting.
6. Move legislation forward for a hands-free statute to catch other distractions not just for texting.

STRATEGIES

CONDUCT EFFECTIVE DISTRACTED DRIVING PUBLIC EDUCATION INITIATIVES

OBJECTIVE #1

Educate the public about the dangers of distracted driving with the goal of changing driver behavior.

Short-Term (1-2 years) Activities:

Develop a new distracted driving awareness video.

Lead Agency: OHSP

Contact Name: Kendall Wingrove

Ongoing Activities:

Promote awareness of Michigan's texting law, and Kelsey's Law, through the Michigan Department of State (MDOS) and OHSP websites and publications.

Lead Agency: MDOS

Contact Name: Bobby Gwizdz

Lead Agency: OHSP

Contact Name: Linda Fech

Continue to support and promote the driving simulator program in Michigan high schools. Twelve simulators were purchased and deployed throughout the state to ensure requests can be met. The simulators provide a hands-on activity to educate teens and young adults about the dangers of distracted and impaired driving. The simulator contact list is available on the OHSP webpage: www.michigan.gov/ohsp.

Lead Agency: OHSP

Contact Name: Linda Fech

Promote the Strive for a Safer Drive (S4SD) program, which is a statewide high school-based safe driving initiative led by teens for teens. The program is sponsored by the Ford Motor Company Fund and OHSP. High schools are given \$1,000 to support a traffic safety campaign. Students choose a traffic safety topic such as distracted driving, safety belts, impaired driving, speeding, or winter driving and develop a traffic safety campaign. Campaigns are documented in a video or PowerPoint, and winners are selected by the sponsors with the top 5 receiving cash prizes. Approximately 80 percent of schools focus on distracted driving. Participating schools attend a Ford Driving Skills for Life hands-on driving clinic in the spring.

Lead Agency: Transportation Improvement Association (TIA)

Contact Name: Tony Surman

Lead Agency: OHSP

Contact Name: Linda Fech

Continue the annual high school distracted driving awareness billboard competition. High school students are invited to create billboard designs that encourage the public to not drive distracted. A panel of traffic safety professionals, State Farm agents, and students determine the final design. The winning design, which is displayed during National Distracted Driving Awareness Month (April), generally has more than 16 million impressions throughout the state of Michigan.

Lead Agency: TIA

Contact Name: Jim Santilli

Lead Agency: State Farm

Contact Name: Nick Metzger

Remembering Ally: Distracted Driving Awareness Campaign

The "Remembering Ally: Distracted Driving Awareness Campaign" educates the public, primarily teens and young adults, about the dangers of distracted driving. As a 16-year-old award-winning performer, Ally Zimmerman loved giving back to others. She had dreams of changing the world. But her dreams, along with her life, were taken away by a distracted driver. Ally's mother, Laurel Zimmerman, and TIA's CEO travel to high schools and colleges/universities throughout Michigan to share Ally's story and increase distracted driving awareness. The campaign advocates for drivers to keep their eyes on the road and hands on the wheel through a variety of resources, which include posters, public service announcements, and a powerful award-winning distracted driving crash video that has been viewed in more than 90 countries.

Lead Agency: TIA

Contact Name: Jim Santilli

Kids Driving Responsibly (KDR) Challenge

This campaign focuses on the youth in Michigan, educating them on the dangers of using a cell phone while driving. Presentations are given to high school and university students on the importance of not talking or texting while driving.

Contact Name: Bonnie Raffaele

Support National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, which takes place annually during April.

Lead Agency: Distracted Driving Action Team

Review the information in the Michigan Driver Education Curriculum Segment 2 Risk Awareness Fact Sheets to ensure they cover the latest information on distracted driving, and recommend revisions as appropriate.

Lead Agency: MDOS

Contact Name: Bobby Gwizdz

Review distracted driving information in MDOS publications and on the website, and recommend revisions as appropriate.

Lead Agency: MDOS

Contact Name: Bobby Gwizdz

PROMOTE DISTRACTED DRIVING ENFORCEMENT

OBJECTIVE #2

Promote effective distracted driving enforcement strategies.

Short-Term (1-2 years) Activities:

Share enforcement efforts and results through articles in OHSP's Safety Network Newsletter.

Lead Agency: OHSP

Contact Name: Kendall Wingrove

Ongoing Activities:

Develop and promote a new distracted driving enforcement strategy to change driver behavior.

Lead Agency: **Shelby Township Police Department**

Contact Name: **Lieutenant Jeff Daniel**

Seek workshop opportunities at the Michigan Traffic Safety Summit to highlight successful enforcement strategies that target distracted driving.

Lead Agency: **OHSP**

Contact Name: **Pat Eliason**

Promote "Operation Ghost Rider" in other locations around the state & continue to support other enforcement efforts.

Lead Agency: **Shelby Township Police Department**

Contact Name: **Lieutenant Jeff Daniel**

CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT LOW-COST ROADWAY COUNTERMEASURES

OBJECTIVE #3

Provide roadway alarm systems to alert distracted drivers (i.e. rumble strips) and remove roadside obstacles to reduce crash injury severity.

Short-Term (1-2 years) Activities:

- The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will encourage the use of centerline and edge-line rumble strips by local road agencies.

Long-Term Activities:

- MDOT will investigate the application of intersection warning systems in Michigan.
- MDOT will investigate the application of transverse rumble strips in advance of stop sign controlled intersections on the state system, and also the use of transverse rumbles by local road agencies.

Ongoing Activities:

- MDOT will continue implementing centerline and edge-line rumble strips as part of construction standards.
- MDOT will continue to investigate and implement roadway improvements to reduce the likelihood and severity of runoff road and/or head-on collisions. (rumble strips, cable median barriers).
- MDOT continues to install curve delineation, and enhance existing curve delineation in areas where run off the road crashes are occurring. This reduces the likelihood of severe injuries.
- MDOT recommends to the local road agencies to delineate curves in areas where they have run-off-the-road crashes. This reduces the likelihood of severe injuries.
- MDOT encourages local road agencies to remove roadside hazards (i.e. trees), and improve the clear zone and recovery area in areas where they have run-off-the-road crashes. This reduces the likelihood of severe injuries.
- MDOT continues to encourage attendance of local owning road agencies at the annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit.

IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION ON DRIVER DISTRACTIONS INVOLVED IN CRASHES

OBJECTIVE #4

Improve the accuracy of distracted driving statistics through encouraging law enforcement officers to ask questions to determine if a crash was caused by driver distraction, and ensure officers mark the UD-10 as appropriate.

Short-Term (1-2 years) Activities:

The Michigan State Police Criminal Justice Information Center is currently offering all law enforcement agencies statewide UD-10 update training, in addition to new user training.

Lead Agency: MSP

Contact Name: Sydney Smith

The Michigan State Police Traffic Crash Reporting Unit is currently presenting on the importance of correctly identifying and properly coding the "Driver Condition" and "Hazardous Action" sections of the UD-10. This presentation revolves around a "mini-study" that indicated approximately 60% of traffic crashes can be attributed to a distracted driver.

Lead Agency: MSP

Contact Name: Sgt. Scott Carlson

MONITOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW COUNTERMEASURES AND IDENTIFY THOSE THAT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED IN MICHIGAN

OBJECTIVE #5

Monitor updates to *Countermeasures that Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide For State Highway Safety Offices*, published by NHTSA.

Ongoing Activities:

Provide updates and recommendations as appropriate.

Lead Agency: OHSP

Contact Name: Linda Fech

MONITOR DISTRACTED DRIVING LEGISLATION

OBJECTIVE #6

Monitor legislative activity in states related to distracted driving, cell phones, and texting. Also, monitor national evaluations of distracted driving legislation and recommendations by national traffic safety organizations.

Ongoing Activities:

TIA and OHSP will monitor legislation and provide updates and recommendations as appropriate.

Lead Agency: TIA

Contact Name: Jim Santilli

Lead Agency: OHSP

Contact Name: Linda Fech

Promote and support H.B. 4466

Lead Agency: Shelby Township Police Department

Contact Name: Lieutenant Jeff Daniel

Distracted Driving Action Plan 2016 - 2018

November 22, 2016

ACRONYMS

DOT	United States Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
GTSAC	Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission
MDOS	Michigan Department of State
MDOT	Michigan Department of Transportation
MSP	Michigan Department of State Police
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
OHSP	Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning
TIA	Transportation Improvement Association
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VTTI	Virginia Tech Transportation Institute

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The Distracted Driving Action Team is made up of members from the following agencies:

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Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning
Michigan State Police
Michigan State University Police
Mid-Michigan Medical Center
Mott Community College Police Department
Shelby Township Police Department
State Farm
Transportation Improvement Association