



NEWS RELEASE

April 12, 2023

Emily Graves, Community Outreach Specialist

egraves@cityofventura.ca.gov

Get off your apps: April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Ventura, CA. – April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month, and throughout the month, the Ventura Police Department will be actively looking for drivers who are in violation of the state’s hands-free cell phone law.

“Holding your phone and using it while driving is not only dangerous, but also illegal,” said Corporal David Curtis. “Before starting the car, silence your phone, activate the ‘do not disturb’ feature, or put it somewhere you can’t reach.”

According to the 2022 California Statewide Public Opinion Survey, nearly 72% of drivers surveyed said that distracted driving because of texting was their biggest safety concern. In 2021, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) issued nearly 56,000 citations for distracted driving.

Under current law, drivers are not allowed to hold a phone or electronic communications device while operating a vehicle. This includes talking, texting, scrolling social media, or using any type of application. Using a handheld cell phone while driving is punishable by a fine. Violating the hands-free law for a second time within 36 months of a prior conviction for the same offense will result in a point being added to a driver’s record.

If you have an important phone call, text, email, pull over to a safe parking spot. Other distractions include eating, grooming, reaching for something, changing clothes, playing games with passengers, or anything that takes your hands off the wheels, eyes off the road, or mind off driving.

Funding for distracted driving enforcement is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

###