


Distracted Driving Legislation



Highlights

- Effective September 1, 2011, restricts drivers from:
 - using hand-held cell phones
 - texting or e-mailing
 - using electronic devices like laptop computers, video games, cameras, video entertainment displays and programming portable audio players (e.g., MP3 players)
 - entering information on GPS units
 - reading printed materials in the vehicle
 - writing, printing or sketching, and
 - personal grooming
- Complements the current *driving without due care and attention* legislation
- Applies to all vehicles as defined by the *Traffic Safety Act*, including bicycles
- Applies to all roads in both urban and rural areas of the province
- The fine for this new offence is \$172.

Activity/Device	Legislation
Cell phone use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A driver must not hold, view or manipulate an electronic communication device that can send or receive phone calls, electronic data, electronic mail or text messages. • A driver may use a cell phone in hands-free mode - this means the device is not held in the driver's hand and is activated by voice or a single touch to the device.
Use of personal digital assistant (PDA) devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A driver must not hold, view or manipulate an electronic communication device that can send or receive phone calls, electronic data, electronic mail or text messages. • A driver may use the cell phone function of a PDA in hands-free mode - this means the device is not held in the driver's hand and is activated by voice or a single touch to the device.
Hand-held or wireless or electronic devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A driver must not hold, view or manipulate a hand-held or wireless electronic device.
Use of radio communication devices (e.g. CB radios, "Mike" technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers may only use hand-held radio communication devices if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> they are drivers of escort, pilot or trail vehicles and are using a radio communication device for the purpose set out in the regulation. using the radio communication device to contact their employer, where that employee is required to maintain radio contact with his or her employer. using the radio communication device for the purpose of participating in a search, rescue or emergency management situation.

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Activity/Device	Legislation
Use of radio communication devices (e.g. CB radios, "Mike" technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers may use radio communication devices in <i>hands-free mode</i> - this means the device is not held in the driver's hand and is activated by voice or a single touch to the device.
Contacting emergency response units (e.g. 911)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers may use a hand held phone to contact an emergency response unit.
Portable audio players (e.g., Mp3 and other Music/Audio Players)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A driver may use a music/audio player but it must be programmed or set up in advance of driving so that drivers are not manually typing or inputting information while driving. If the audio player is connected to the vehicle sound system, drivers may use the vehicle controls to operate the MP3 audio player.
GPS navigation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A driver may use a GPS system but it must be programmed or set up in advance of driving so that drivers are not manually typing or inputting information while driving. GPS units must be secured to the vehicle and may only be controlled in a voice-activated manner while driving.
Video display screens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A driver may not permit a video display screen to be activated and within view of that driver unless the screen is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a GPS navigation device being used to obtain navigation information, a cellular telephone being used in hands-free mode, a logistical transportation tracking system device used to track vehicle location, driver status or the delivery of packages or other goods for commercial purposes, a dispatch system used for the transportation of passengers, a collision avoidance system device when used to provide collision avoidance information, or an instrument, gauge, device or system that is used to provide information to the individual regarding the status of various systems and position of the vehicle.
Logistical Transportation Tracking Systems and Dispatch Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers are restricted from holding, viewing or manipulating these systems while driving. Drivers must program them before they begin driving. However, the display screens of these systems are permitted in vehicles that require them for commercial purposes.
Reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers are restricted from reading printed materials inside the vehicle while driving (e.g. newspapers, novels etc.).
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers are restricted from writing, drawing or sketching while driving.
Grooming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers are restricted from attending to personal hygiene or grooming while driving.

Go to: <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/distracteddriving.htm> for more information on Alberta's new distracted driving legislation.