

DRIVING DISTRACTIONS IN BC

Texting or Talking on Hand Held Device Viewed as among the Most Risky Things to do while Driving



Ipsos Reid

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Vancouver, BC – A new Ipsos Reid poll in British Columbia, conducted on behalf of ICBC, shows that most BC drivers consider using a hand held device while driving to be among the most risky driving distractions.

Perceived Riskiness of Driving Behaviours

British Columbia drivers consider both texting and talking on a hand held cell phone to be among the most risky things to do while driving. Nearly nine-in-ten (87%) rate 'texting or emailing on a hand held device' as 'very risky'. Two-thirds (65%) say that 'talking on a hand held cell phone' is 'very risky'.

Other driving behaviours considered to be as risky, or more risky, than these two behaviours include 'reading' (91% 'very risky'), 'driving while sleepy or exhausted' (78% 'very risky') and 'personal grooming' (72% 'very risky').

Comparing Risks to Drinking and Driving

Many British Columbia drivers consider both texting and talking on a hand held cell phone to be as risky as drinking and driving. Three-quarters (76%) say that 'texting or emailing on a hand held device' is as risky as drinking and driving. Half (50%) consider 'talking on a hand held cell phone' to be as risky as drinking and driving.

Past 12 Month Behaviours

Despite the perceived risks, some British Columbia drivers say they have texted or talked on a hand held cell phone while driving during the past 12 months. About one-in-six (16%) say they have 'talked on a hand held cell phone'. About one-in-ten (9%) say they have 'texted or emailed on a hand held device'.

Among those who have 'talked on a hand held cell phone' while driving in the past 12 months, the top reasons given include 'I use the speakerphone function' (42%), 'it was a very short call' (42%) and 'I pulled over after answering the phone' (37%).

Frequency of Seeing Other Drivers Violate Restrictions

A slight majority (53%) of British Columbia drivers say they see other drivers violating the restrictions placed on the use of these hand held electronic devices 'several times a day'. A further two-in-ten (21%) say they see other drivers violate the restrictions 'about once a day'.

Emotional Reaction to Seeing Other Drivers Violate Restrictions

Irritation is the most common reaction to seeing other drivers violate the restrictions on hand held electronic devices. Six-in-ten (60%) drivers say they feel 'irritated' when they see other drivers violate the restrictions. Other common emotional responses include feeling 'angry' (41%), 'disappointed' (40%) and 'worried' (37%).

These are the findings of an online Ipsos Reid poll of 917 adult British Columbia drivers (drive at least one hour per week) conducted using Ipsos Reid's online household panel between August 10 and 18, 2011. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of ± 3.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error would be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to 2006 Census data.

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