

Westminster Police Department

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Distracted Driving Enforcement Campaign “U Drive U Text U Pay”

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With ever increasing demands on our personal and professional time in today’s busy society, learning to juggle multiple tasks at once is something we all face daily. As a result, a new traffic safety epidemic has emerged on America’s roadways that demand immediate attention: Distracted Driving!

In 2012, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reported 3,328 people were killed and approximately 421,000 were injured in traffic collisions involving a distracted driver. Nine percent of fatal traffic collisions in 2010 were reported as distraction-affected collisions. In 2011, 11 percent of all drivers under the age of 20 involved in fatal traffic collisions were reported as distracted at the time of the collision. This age group had the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted. One of the most alarming and widespread forms of distracted driving is cell phone usage. Studies show that driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent. A report from the National Safety Council found that people talking on cell phones or sending text messages cause more than one out of every four traffic collisions.

While those numbers may sound like just statistics, they are anything but. They could be parents, children, neighbors and friends from right here in Westminster. Text messaging is of heightened concern because it combines three types of distraction – visual, manual and cognitive. In other words, texting involves taking your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, and your mind off the task of driving.

To tackle this ever-increasing problem, NHTSA is focusing on ways to change the behavior of drivers. One of the ways is through enforcement actions by law enforcement.

The 2014 National Distracted Enforcement Campaign takes place **April 10-15, 2014**. This effort is part of our national “U Drive U Text U Pay” high visibility enforcement campaign that combines periods of intense anti-texting enforcement. Yes, this is a national problem, but it also affects us right here in Westminster. No one is immune from the dangers of distracted driving. So please remember: One text or call could wreck it all. “U Drive U Text U Pay”.

<http://www.westminster-ca.gov/depts/police/>