



# Reducing Driver Distractions



*Ford strongly encourages drivers to keep their eyes on the road and hands on the wheel.*

## Ford Helps Tackle Driver Distraction

Distracted driving is an important issue for everyone on the road today. According to a 100-car study conducted by Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, driver inattention that may involve looking away from the road for more than a few seconds is a factor in nearly 80 percent of accidents.

Ford Motor Company devotes considerable attention to this traffic safety issue through research, testing, education and technology, and recently became the first automaker to endorse a federal ban on manual texting with hand-held devices while driving.

In a new national survey, 86 percent of licensed U.S. drivers described texting while driving as "very dangerous," with 93 percent supporting a national ban on it. Despite strong support for a nationwide hand-held texting ban, only 42 percent of respondents believe drivers would stop texting if banned. More than 75 percent believe there would be more compliance if hands-free or voice-activated technologies were widely available.

The survey was conducted by Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates on behalf of Ford Motor Company.

## Research Drives Solutions

Research is the key to solving the driver distraction issue. It influences public policy, driver education and the development of advanced technologies and vehicle features.

As part of its effort to reduce risky driving behavior, in 2001 Ford became the first auto manufacturer in North America to invest in a full-motion-based driving simulator, so it could lead the study of driver reaction and behavior in a controlled, safe laboratory setting.



*In Ford's driving simulator, drivers sit behind the wheel of a specially instrumented car, surrounded by a video screen.*

Ford's Virtual Test Track Experiment (VIRTTEX) simulator uses advanced computers to create a virtual driving environment. Researchers monitor and measure the test subject's ability to cope with a variety of driving situations.

Key findings of Ford's and other research include:

- A growing number of drivers use hand-held wireless communication and music-playing devices while driving.
- Manual operation of electronics that takes the driver's eyes from the road for an extended time creates the kind of distraction that causes accidents.
- Cognitive distraction plays less of a role in crashes and near-miss events than previously believed.
- Many studies show that hands-free, voice-based interfaces offer advantages over hand-held, visual-manual interfaces for command or data entry while driving and reduce the risk of visual driver distractions.

## Ford Driving Skills for Life

According to Ford research, teen drivers are four times more distracted than adult drivers by cell phone use.

Ford Motor Company Fund is addressing that and other teen driver safety concerns with *Ford Driving Skills for Life (FDSFL)*. At FDSFL events, students receive hands-on advanced driver's training in speed and space management, vehicle handling and hazard recognition by some of the nation's top professional driving instructors.

Now, FDSFL is intensifying its efforts to educate teens about the dangers of distracted driving by routinely challenging students' powers of concentration during supervised drives



*FDSFL instructors routinely challenge students' powers of concentration.*

on controlled courses. By increasing the distractions, the instructors are helping students recognize dangerous behaviors and avoid them.

FDSFL also reaches teens with [www.drivingskillsforlife.com](http://www.drivingskillsforlife.com), which offers a learning module, car care videos, driving tip videos, games and an eco-driving curriculum.



## Meeting Voluntary Guidelines

Ford has worked with the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers to develop driver-interface test methods and voluntary guidelines that address driver focus and interaction with telematics systems.

The guidelines and Ford's test methods were used in the development of SYNC®, Ford's fully integrated, voice-activated in-car communications and entertainment system for mobile devices.

Basically, the guidelines dictate that any manual cell phone tasks on the SYNC system that can't be completed in a minimum eyes-off-road-time are locked out when the vehicle is in motion, and can only be operated when the vehicle is stopped.



*Ford's efforts to meet voluntary guidelines address driver focus and interaction with vehicle systems.*

## SYNC® Traffic, Directions & Information (TDI)

Ford knows that customers are increasingly using mobile electronics while driving, and studies show hands-free, voice-activated systems such as Ford SYNC offer significant safety benefits over hand-held devices.

### WITHOUT SYNC



The latest SYNC application, Traffic, Directions & Information (TDI), provides simple hands-free access to audio of personalized traffic reports, precise driving directions and up-to-date information including business listings, news, sports and weather.

### WITH SYNC TDI



SYNC TDI is available as an option on nearly all 2010 Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicles. There are more than 1 million SYNC-equipped Ford Motor Company vehicles on the road.

*SYNC TDI leverages industry-leading voice-recognition software, integrated GPS and Bluetooth-capable phones.*



## Statement on Driver Distraction Legislation

"At Ford, we think driver distraction is a critically important issue. Drivers experience many different types of distractions on a daily basis. Drivers are going to have conversations, read maps and directions, and listen to music while they drive.

The most complete and most recent research shows that activity that draws drivers' eyes away from the road for an extended period while driving, such as text messaging, substantially increases the risk of accidents. Ford believes hands-free, voice-activated technology substantially reduces that risk by helping drivers to keep their hands on the wheel and eyes on the road.

Ford supports a ban on hand-held text messaging while driving – and we endorse the legislation introduced by Sen. Charles E. Schumer (D-NY) and Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) that would encourage a more rapid transition to hands-free and voice-activated technologies. This legislative approach addresses a nationwide problem we can all agree is necessary to improve safety."

*– Sue Cischke, Ford group vice president for Sustainability, Environment and Safety Engineering*

## MyKey™

As part of a comprehensive approach to teen safety, Ford has introduced an innovative new technology – called MyKey – designed to help parents encourage their teenagers to drive safer and more fuel efficiently, and increase safety belt usage.

MyKey allows owners to program a key that can limit the vehicle's top speed to 80 mph with special chimes sounded at 45, 55 and 65 mph. MyKey also limits audio volume to less than half of the maximum, encourages safety belt usage and provides earlier low-fuel warnings.

MyKey debuted as standard equipment on the 2010 Ford Focus and Taurus and will become standard on many other Ford, Lincoln and Mercury models.



### MyKey Persistent Belt-Minder®

*If the MyKey driver and/or front passenger does not buckle their safety belt, then the MyKey Persistent Belt-Minder® will display a warning and mute the audio system.*