



IDOT, ISP: ‘U Drive. U Text. U Pay.’

by Paul Wappel
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SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Transportation is teaming up with the Illinois State Police and more than 200 local law enforcement agencies to promote Distracted Driving Awareness Month, reminding motorists to “Drop it and Drive.” Throughout April, law enforcement officers will work together to enforce texting and distracted driving laws.



“Distracted driving is one of the leading causes of crashes on our roads today,” **said Steve Travia, IDOT’s Director of Highways and Chief Engineer.** “During Distracted Driving Awareness Month, police will boost enforcement efforts, stopping anyone they see texting and driving. Remember: ‘U Drive. U Text. U Pay.’”

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, between 2012 and 2021, approximately 32,000 lives were lost in crashes involving distracted drivers. Everyone has the potential for distracted driving crashes, but those between the ages of 16 and 24 are especially at risk. If you need to text, pull over to a safe location, or if you have a passenger, consider appointing a designated texter. Whatever the solution, don’t text and drive.

“While driving, many of us are tempted to check our phone, just quickly, when we hear that ding of notification,” **said ISP Division of Patrol Col. Chris Owen.** “That quick

look could cause a crash and cost you your life or the lives of others. Whatever that message is on your phone, it's not more important than your life or the lives of others. Keep your eyes on the road and your hands on the wheel.”

To keep your attention on the road, remember these tips:

- If you are expecting a text or need to send one, pull over and park your car in a safe location.
- Do not engage in social media scrolling or messaging while driving.
- Cell phone use is habit-forming. Struggling to not text and drive? Activate your phone’s “Do Not Disturb” feature.

The Illinois distracted driving campaign is funded with federal traffic safety funds administered by IDOT.