


# 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"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
Use of personal digital assistant (PDA) devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
Hand-held or wireless or electronic devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A driver must not hold, view or manipulate a hand-held or wireless electronic device.</li> </ul>
Use of radio communication devices (e.g. CB radios, "Mike" technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers may only use hand-held radio communication devices if:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they are drivers of escort, pilot or trail vehicles and are using a radio communication device for the purpose set out in the regulation.</li> <li>• using the radio communication device to contact their employer, where that employee is required to maintain radio contact with his or her employer.</li> <li>• using the radio communication device for the purpose of participating in a search, rescue or emergency management situation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Activity/Device	Legislation
Use of radio communication devices (e.g. CB radios, "Mike" technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
Contacting emergency response units (e.g. 911)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers may use a hand held phone to contact an emergency response unit.</li> </ul>
Portable audio players (e.g., Mp3 and other Music/Audio Players)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• If the audio player is connected to the vehicle sound system, drivers may use the vehicle controls to operate the MP3 audio player.</li> </ul>
GPS navigation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• GPS units must be secured to the vehicle and may only be controlled in a voice-activated manner while driving.</li> </ul>
Video display screens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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"> <li>• a GPS navigation device being used to obtain navigation information,</li> <li>• a cellular telephone being used in hands-free mode,</li> <li>• a logistical transportation tracking system device used to track vehicle location, driver status or the delivery of packages or other goods for commercial purposes,</li> <li>• a dispatch system used for the transportation of passengers,</li> <li>• a collision avoidance system device when used to provide collision avoidance information, or</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Logistical Transportation Tracking Systems and Dispatch Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers are restricted from holding, viewing or manipulating these systems while driving. Drivers must program them before they begin driving.</li> <li>• However, the display screens of these systems are permitted in vehicles that require them for commercial purposes.</li> </ul>
Reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers are restricted from reading printed materials inside the vehicle while driving (e.g. newspapers, novels etc.).</li> </ul>
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers are restricted from writing, drawing or sketching while driving.</li> </ul>
Grooming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers are restricted from attending to personal hygiene or grooming while driving.</li> </ul>

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