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## APRIL IS DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH

Distracted driving is one of the fastest growing safety issues we face on the roads today. Distracted drivers aren't just a threat to themselves; they are a danger to everyone else sharing the road with them.

With portable technology now more accessible than ever, driver distractions have risen to the highest numbers to date. With this technology, we now live in a time where all of us have become accustomed to instant information. Drivers need make it a priority to put that technology on hold when operating their vehicles.

Recent statistics show:

- 11 teens die each day as a result of distracted driving.
- 21% of teen drivers involved in fatal accidents were distracted by their cell phones.
- 94% of teen drivers acknowledge the dangers of texting and driving, but 35% admitted to doing it anyway.
- Drivers using hand-held devices while driving are **FOUR** times as likely to get into motor vehicle accidents serious enough to injure themselves or others.

The Iowa Legislature recently passed a more comprehensive electronic communication devices law. As of July 1, 2017, Iowa's distracted driving law became a primary offense. This means a law enforcement officer can stop any driver who is using any portable electronic device or texting while driving. It doesn't matter if the user is reading, writing, or sending a message. The only exception to drivers using these devices in a motor vehicle is that the vehicle must be at a complete stop and off the traveled portion of the roadway.

