



Safety Gram

Marine Corps Mishap Synopsis / & Lessons Learned

Safety Division's Monthly *Safety Gram* is provided to senior leaders to maintain awareness of mishap trends that directly affect the operational readiness of the Corps. This information should also be disseminated at every level of your command to assist high-risk Marines and Sailors in understanding the impact of the decisions they make every day both on and off-duty.

August 2012: Mishap Summary

The Mishaps below occurred throughout the Marine Corps from August 1st—August 31st, 2012 causing serious injury or death to Marines, and/or damage to equipment.

01 August 2012: A Marine was traveling west in his POV on State Route-Highway 62 near Joshua Tree when he was involved in a fatal collision with another vehicle traveling east on Highway 62.



01 August 2012: A Marine traveling on his motorcycle on I-5 succumbed to injuries received after being struck by another vehicle.

11 August 2012: During a rain-storm on interstate 95 a Marine lost control of his vehicle hit the guard rail and flipped his vehicle several times before impacting a tree. The Marine was found unresponsive at the scene of the accident.



11 August 2012: A Marine was traveling on a highway at a high rate speed, when he collided with a SUV. Marine sustained multiply injuries and was declared brain dead by the attending physician.

11 August 2012: A Marine was swimming at a public beach. Trying to come ashore he was caught in a riptide and dragged down by the incoming waves. A rescue team found the Marine 50 meters from last point of view dead.

19 August 2012: A Marine on a motorcycle traveling on an interstate was passing a semi truck. When reaching the front of the truck a sudden crosswind pushed him across his lane and into another lane where he collided with the rear quarter panel of a car in the lane and crashed.

26 August 2012: A Marine on a motorcycle crashed while attempting to overtake another vehicle when trying to enter the interstate onramp. The Marine ran out of room, swerved and struck the exit sign. The collision threw the Marine from his motorcycle and he impacted the guard rail.



Back to School

As schools open for another year, students, parents and drivers are urged to keep traffic safety in mind.

In 2010, more than 2,800 school-aged children were killed in traffic-related crashes, according to the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Most of those deaths occurred in the afternoon, between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m.

A nationwide traffic safety campaign called "Think Safe, Ride Safe, Be Safe!" encourages students to take the following safety precautions when traveling to school by foot, bike, bus or car.

When traveling by school bus:

- Keep away from the curb. Take five giant steps from the road and wait until the school bus driver says to board before approaching the vehicle.
- Once on the bus, go straight to your seat, sit facing forward and follow the instructions of the bus driver.
- Look both ways for cars as you exit the bus. Once you are off the bus, take five giant steps from the vehicle.
- If it is necessary to cross the street, look left-right-left to make sure no cars are coming.

When cycling to school:

- Always wear a helmet and don't forget to buckle the chin strap.
- Ride on bike paths or on the sidewalk, not in the street.

Parents who drive their children to school or daycare should secure each child in the proper child safety seat, booster seat or seat belt, depending on the child's age and size. Before locking the doors and leaving the car, adults are reminded to make sure that no child has been accidentally left in the vehicle.

And, of course, all vehicle occupants -- including adults and teen drivers -- are urged to buckle up. The NHTSA says that the best way to avoid serious injury or death in a crash is to always keep your seat belt fastened.

More information

The Nemours Foundation has more about [travel safety for kids](#).

Tips for Walkers

- Developmentally, most kids can't judge speeds and distances until at least age 10, so younger kids need to cross with an adult.
- Did you know most walking injuries happen mid-block or someplace other than intersections? Whenever possible, cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Look left, right and left again before crossing the street, and keep looking and listening while crossing.
- Walk, don't run, when crossing the street.
- It's always best to walk on sidewalks or paths, but if there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible.
- Remove headphones when crossing the street
- Stop walking while talking on a phone or texting
- Don't engage in horseplay. Never push or shove when near a roadway.
- Distraction among drivers is at an all-time high today, so try to make eye contact with the driver before you step into the road.

Tips For Drivers

- Slow down and be especially alert in residential neighborhoods and school zones, before and after school hours.
- Most walkers are injured mid-block, not at intersections, so watch out for kids who may dart into traffic or cross where they shouldn't.
- Give pedestrians the right of way at a crosswalk. Using cell phones, even hands-free, makes it harder for drivers to be alert to walkers who may also be distracted on cell phones.



For more information on Back to School Safety Check out the [National Safety Council Back to School](#) Safety webpage.



Did You Know: Distracted Driving

As the **Marine Corps** continues to transform with the times and ahead of our enemies (e.g. the Marine Times article, “*Every Marine to Receive a Smart Phone*”) and we recruit more and more Marines that are adept at using technology in their everyday lives; we must continue to reinforce the risks associated with distracted driving. On a daily basis, there are up to 8,000 crashes on our nation’s roads due to distracted driving. More than one million people have died in car crashes over the past 25 years in the United States, with 33,788 lives lost in 2010 alone.

Virginia Tech Transportation Institute Study

80% of all crashes involved driver inattention within 3 seconds of the crash. Below are a few statistics about driver behaviors that increase risk of an accident:

- **Texting** – Increases Risk 23 Times
- **Reaching for a moving object** – Increases Risk 9 Times
- **Talking on Cell Phone** – Increases Risk 4 Times
- **Driving Drowsy** – Increases Risk 4 Times
- **Reading** – Increases Risk 3.4 Times
- **Applying Makeup** – Increases Risk 3 Times

Other important facts not mentioned in the Virginia Tech study are:

- Drivers spend more than half their time behind the wheel engaged in distracted behavior.
- Eating, smoking, adjusting music, or rubbernecking while driving can be just as dangerous as texting, emailing, or talking on a cell phone.
- Passengers are one of the most frequently reported causes of distraction, with young children being four times more distracting than adults and infants being eight times more distracting.

A majority of drivers – 92% – agree that texting or emailing while driving is unacceptable and 80% support laws against reading, typing or sending text messages or emails while driving, according to the AAA Foundation’s [2010 Traffic Safety Culture Index](#), yet a quarter of drivers reported texting or emailing while driving in the previous month.

As **America’s Expeditionary Force in Readiness**, the United States Marine Corps continues to defend our Nation amidst a world of ever-increasing instability and conflict and considers all private motor vehicle fatalities an unnecessary and preventable loss of life. These senseless deaths not only affect the Marine’s family and friends but also reduce our readiness both through the loss of the individual Marine and the negative effect on those Marines who have lost a close service member. It’s time that our Marines stop ignoring the facts and take action to change our mind set while driving on our roads. The first step is to change their attitudes toward distracted driving.

An Executive Order to eliminate text messaging while driving was signed by President Barack Obama on October 1st, 2009. With nearly 3 million civilian employees, the Federal Government has taken this measure to reduce the dangers of text messaging while driving. Recent deadly crashes involving drivers distracted by text messaging while behind the wheel highlight a growing danger on our roads. This order is summarized below. For more information, or to read the order in its entirety, follow this link: [Government Policy on Texting and Driving](#)

The following orders and directives pertain to distracted driving:

Facts:

- Every day, Federal employees drive Government-owned, or Government-leased (collectively, GOV) or privately-owned vehicles (POV) on official Government business.
- Some Federal employees use Government-supplied electronic devices to text or e-mail while driving.
- A Federal Government-wide prohibition (ban) on the use of text messaging while driving on official business or while using Government-supplied equipment will help save lives, reduce injuries, and set an example for State and local governments, private employers, and individual drivers.
- This policy is extended to cover Federal contractors as well.

USMC Implementation:

- The Marine Corps has “distracted driving” mitigation and policy in place. Distracted driving is defined in MCO 5100.19F—Ch. 7 Marine Corps Traffic Safety Program (DRIVESAFE) specifically addresses using cell phones and other devices while driving.

Text Messaging While Driving by Federal Employees:

- Federal employees **shall not** engage in text messaging while: driving a GOV, or when driving a POV while on official Government business or use electronic equipment supplied by the Government while driving

