

HEALTH & SAFETY OPERATIONAL GUIDELINE			
Title:	DISTRACTED DRIVING		
Section:	GENERAL	Number:	012-002
Subsection:	Personal Safety/Duties	Effective Date:	November 23, 2009

Definitions

“Display screen” includes a television, computer, portable DVD player and other device on which an electronically created picture or image is formed that is visible to the driver

“Drive” means operating a vehicle on a public road; “driving” has similar meaning

“Hand-held device” means a device that is capable of receiving or transmitting wireless telephone communications, electronic data, mail or text messages (e.g. cell phone, smartphone) and; an entertainment device that is unrelated to the safe operation of the vehicle (e.g. portable gaming console)

“Inattentional blindness” means a defect of concentration. An object is “seen” by the retina, but not “detected” by the brain

“Mobile data terminal” means a computerized device that is used extensively to communicate with a dispatcher or control centre

“Portable radio” means a voice communication device with a hand-held unit that is *both receiver and microphone* that is operated by a push-to-talk function on a set frequency that does not allow incoming and outgoing transmissions at the same time (e.g. “walkie-talkie”, “mike phone”) and includes a hand microphone

“Sensory inputs” include:

- *External*
 - visual (scenery, other vehicles, pedestrians, animals, signs/signals)
 - auditory (CD player, radio, conversations, horns, sirens)
- *Internal*
 - personal problems, anxieties, anger, worries
 - day-dreaming
 - fatigue/drowsiness

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“Two-way radio” means a voice communication device that consists of *a main receiver unit and a separate hand-held microphone* that is operated by a push-to-talk function on a set frequency that does not allow incoming and outgoing transmissions at the same time

“Vehicle” includes a Town vehicle and a vehicle being used for Town purposes

Purpose and Scope

- Define “distracted driving”
- Describe types of distractions
- Provide procedures for avoiding distracted driving

General

Distracted driving occurs when the number of sensory inputs exceeds a person’s ability to mentally process them all. As a result, the person’s attention and focus is diverted away from the primary task of driving. Inattentive blindness can be an outcome.

Common driver distractions include:

- Adjusting car audio system or vehicle controls
- Using a two-way radio
- Using personal electronics (laptop, handhelds, portable DVD)
- Using a route navigation system
- Using a hand-held device
- Reading a map or other document
- Reaching for an item
- Personal grooming
- Writing/taking notes
- Looking for a street address
- Drinking and eating
- External and internal sensory inputs

Distracted driving can result in:

- property damage
- injuries and fatalities
- charges and fines

A Town employee may be personally liable for any charge, fine and/or damage resulting from the employee’s failure to adhere to the applicable legislation and this Operational Guideline.

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Safety requires a personal commitment from every employee to limit distractions while driving. To ensure the safe use of a communication device in a vehicle, the following procedures apply.

Procedures

General

1. Communications are kept as brief as possible.
2. Communication equipment is properly set-up, connected and secured before starting to drive.
3. No employee will drive while holding, checking or using a hand-held device or portable radio or two-way radio, except as described in this procedure.
4. No employee shall drive a vehicle equipped with or carrying a device with a display screen, except as described in this procedure.

Permitted Uses

1. An employee may use a hand-held device while driving to contact 9-1-1.
2. An employee may use a hand-held device or portable radio or two-way radio in hands-free mode while driving, meaning:
 - the driver can engage hands-free operation by pressing a single button on the main device or a peripheral (e.g. handset or earpiece) that can be seen by the driver at a quick glance and/or is easily reached without adjusting position, and
 - dialing is voice-activated, and
 - the equipment is secured while the vehicle is moving
3. An employee may use a hand-held device that is not hands-free in a vehicle if:
 - the employee is not driving, or
 - the vehicle is safely and lawfully parked off the traveled portion of the road with hazard lights on, and
 - the vehicle is not in motion, and
 - the vehicle is not impeding traffic
4. Fire Department personnel and any municipal law enforcement officer may drive a vehicle:
 - while holding or using a hand-held device, and
 - with a computer display, and
 - while using a two-way radio while performing their duties
5. A road and water/wastewater employee may drive a vehicle with a mobile data terminal display screen while performing their duties.

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Exceptions

1. A mechanic and automobile technician may test drive a vehicle with a display screen provided the device displays diagnostic information about the vehicle.
2. An employee may drive a vehicle equipped with or carrying a device with a display screen, provided:
 - the device displays information on the conditions, use and immediate environment of the vehicle or vehicle systems or information on the road or weather conditions, or
 - the device has no function other than to provide global position for navigation or to track vehicle location, or
 - the device has no function other than collision avoidance, or
 - a lawful exception applies, and
 - the device is securely mounted to the vehicle
3. Until January 1, 2013, a road and water/wastewater employee may drive a vehicle while using a two-way radio while performing their duties.

Other considerations

- Check your route before leaving
- Complete personal grooming before leaving
- Be familiar with the vehicle equipment, gauges and controls before leaving
- Eliminate or minimize distractions before putting vehicle in drive
- Avoid common distractions while driving by safely pulling over to eliminate or reduce the distraction
- Drive defensively
- See Operational Guideline G106 – Vehicle Operation

THIS GUIDELINE TAKES EFFECT IMMEDIATELY AND REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL REPLACED BY A NEW GUIDELINE OR SUPERSEDED BY LEGISLATION/REGULATION

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Employer Co-Chair, JHSC

Worker Co-Chair, JHSC