

FAST FACTS

According to the Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, Motor vehicle crashes are the number one killer of American teenagers ages 15 to 20.

<http://www.saferoads.org/graduated-driver-licensing>

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, the crash rate for 16-year-old drivers is 15 times that of 20- to 24-year-olds.

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/outreach/safesobr/13qp/facts/factgrad.html>

In 2008, 242 people in Pennsylvania were killed in crashes involving teen drivers. Over the past five years, Pennsylvania crashes involving teen drivers claimed 1,444 lives. Nationally, since 1999, more than 84,400 people have been killed in crashes involving teen drivers.

In 2008, 6,000 people died in an accident involving a distracted driver.

<http://www.distraction.gov/get-involved>

The current Graduated Driver's License (GDL) law in Pennsylvania includes the following components:

- A three-stage licensing system beginning at age 16 for learner's permit, age 16 years and 6 months for the intermediate stage, and age 18 for full licensure (age 17 for teens who complete driver education and are crash and conviction free)
- A mandatory 6 month holding period for the learner's permit stage
- A minimum of 50 hours of supervised practice driving during the learner's permit stage
- A prohibition on unsupervised nighttime driving between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. during the intermediate stage

These changes would improve Pennsylvania's GDL law:

- Non-familial passenger restriction
- Add a prohibition on non-emergency use of cell phones and other communications devices , including texting while driving, during the learner's permit and intermediate stages
- Primary seat belt enforcement for the driver and all under 18 passengers

The percentage of young drivers' texting or using other hand-held electronic devices has increased from 2007 to 2008, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's nationwide survey. The survey shows that the hand-held cell phone use rate in 2008 translates into 812,000 vehicles being driven by someone using a hand-held cell phone at any given moment during daylight hours – which means that an estimated 1 in 10 vehicles had drivers who were using some type of phone (hand-held or hands-free).

The survey also showed:

- Some 1.7 percent of drivers 16 to 24 years old were observed visibly manipulating hand-held electronic devices, up from 1.0 percent the previous year.
- The observed use rate of hand-held electronic devices was higher among females (1.2%) than among males (0.8%).

<http://www.distraction.gov/stats-and-facts/>

Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. (Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)

Using a cell phone use while driving, whether it's hand-held or hands-free, delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent. (Source: University of Utah)

According to an Insurance Institute for Highway Safety survey in 2009, 13 percent of drivers said they did some texting while driving.

2009 Quinnipiac University poll found that:

87 percent support a proposal to require younger drivers with junior licenses to use hands-free phones while driving.

89 percent would outlaw text messaging while driving.

“Seldom is the voice of the public so united on an issue,” said Clay F. Richards, deputy director of Quinnipiac University Polling Institute.

<http://www.quinnipiac.edu/x1327.xml?ReleaseID=1281>