

Saskatchewan's Cellphone Legislation Highlights

- The new law is effective on Jan. 1, 2010.
- The new law prohibits all drivers from using hand-held cellphones to talk, text, email or surf the Internet while driving.
- New drivers, meaning drivers in Saskatchewan's Graduated Driver's Licensing program, cannot use cellphones of any type while operating a motor vehicle.
- Experienced drivers are allowed to use hands-free devices while driving.
- The penalty for an offence associated with this law is \$280 (which includes a victims' surcharge of \$60) and four demerit points under the Safe Driver Recognition and Driver Improvement programs.

Exemptions:

- Police, fire and medical services personnel are exempt from the new law while performing their duties.
- Any driver calling 9-1-1 to report an emergency is also exempt.

Statistics:

- Research from the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute shows that a person who is texting while driving is 23 times more likely to be involved in a collision than a non-distracted driver. The risk for drivers talking on a cellphone is three to six times that of non-distracted drivers.
- In Saskatchewan, driver distraction is a factor in close to 25 per cent of all reported collisions. Distractions include snacking, reading, shaving, putting on makeup or looking at objects outside the vehicle.
- About 75 per cent of new drivers are between the ages of 15 and 18. These drivers make up six per cent of Saskatchewan drivers but account for close to 20 per cent of collisions where driver distraction was the main cause.
- Cellphone use has grown rapidly over the past 10 years and it is expected that tasks related to cellphone use, as a source of driver distraction, will continue to increase.