



[Accident Fatalities: The Threats Posed by Text-Messaging](#)

by [John Demas](#) on 07/13/09 at 12:12 pm

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Text messaging while driving has become such a serious road safety threat that California passed a law making it illegal back on January 1, 2009. www.dmv.ca.gov/cellularphonelaws Unfortunately, text messaging still remains a menace. One 2009 Sacramento accident involved a truck driver who allegedly caused a three-car accident by text messaging just before rear-ending one car that in turn hit another vehicle. Traffic remained congested on Fair Oaks Boulevard near Wilhaggin Drive for quite some time after the collision. (See: <http://www.sacbee.com/static/weblogs/crime/archives/2009/06/texting-driver.html>)

What Text Messaging Statistics and Events Tell Us

As most Americans know, a terrible 2008 Metrolink train accident occurred in southern California involving a train engineer who failed to stop at a red light, killing at least 25 people and injuring far more. Since the accident, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has revealed that the train driver was sending and receiving numerous text messages all day (including one within 30 seconds of the crash), instead of carefully watching the rails and doing his job.

Text messaging in cars, where accident fatalities may be lower, is just as serious a transportation problem. In fact, 14 states and the District of Columbia already forbid texting while driving a car. (See: http://www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/laws/cellphone_laws.html) Furthermore, a U. S. News and World Report article cites one study that claims up to 20 percent of all drivers do some text messaging while driving. The numbers become even more troubling when you look at estimates for drivers between the ages of 18 and 24. As many as sixty-six percent of those youthful drivers may be texting while driving. (See: <http://www.usnews.com/articles/news/national/2008/02/11/outlawing-text-messaging-while-driving.html>)

Given the added distraction of looking down at a cell phone (or other device's) screen while typing out a message, texting is surely more dangerous than talking on a handheld cell phone, though both pose serious threats to road safety. (See: <http://news.aaa-calif.com/pr/aaa/Handsfree-Cell-Phone-Law-Reducing-Number-Of-Drivers-Using-Device.aspx>)

Text Messaging Increases Overall Number of Road Dangers

Since we each have a choice as to whether we text message (or use a cell phone) while driving, we must increase our own personal safety by waiting to pursue those activities when we're not behind

the wheel. This type of caution is necessary since we already have little or no control over the following road dangers:

- Other drivers who are drunk; (See: <http://www.madd.org/About-Us/About-Us/Statistics.aspx>)
- Those who are behind the wheel while abusing street or prescription drugs;
- People who drive while sleep deprived, knowing their slower physical response times endanger many;
- Drivers who carelessly eat, read a map or apply make-up instead of carefully watching the road and nearby drivers;
- Poorly maintained or designed roads or highways; and
- Weather conditions that pose added challenges to even good drivers.

We hope you haven't been harmed in any type of vehicle collision due to text messaging or other careless driving activities. However, if you have been in an accident, we invite you to contact our firm so we can help you evaluate your case. We have been successfully representing clients in this field for many years and know how to obtain the full financial sums available to injured parties under the law.