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Cell phone safety—driving home the importance

These days, it's hard to find someone who does not have a cell phone. Cell phones can be invaluable for those business professionals who spend a lot of time out of the office, or for anyone who wants the added peace of mind of knowing they can call for help in an emergency.

Are there laws limiting the use of cell phones while driving?

Yes. With more than 236 million cell phone users, many states have passed laws prohibiting the use of hand-held phones while driving.

New Jersey prohibits the use of cell phones while operating a motor vehicle on a public highway. Drivers can only be charged as a secondary action after being detained for another violation and fined no less than \$100 and no more than \$250. Hands-free cell phones, however, are permitted.

Drivers under 21 are prohibited from using

hands-free phones on a graduated license permit or provisional license, except in an emergency situation.

Familiarize yourself with your phone

Be sure you review all the literature that comes with your phone. Understand how to use its many features—including speed dial, re-dial and hands-free options.

Be aware of your surroundings and road conditions

If you find yourself in hazardous driving conditions—whether traffic- or weather-related—let your voicemail system pick up the call. A few minutes of paying attention, and pulling over in a safe location, could make a huge difference in your safety and the safety of those around you.

Stay calm on the phone and on the road

Don't use driving time to engage in stressful or emotional conversations. They can distract you from driving safely and sensibly, even if you are using a hands-free phone.

Cell phones can be an invaluable business tool or your lifeline in a real emergency. But, remember, when you're behind the wheel, your most important responsibility is safe driving.



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