

# SAFETY ON THE ROAD

## Take Action To Avoid Driving Distractions

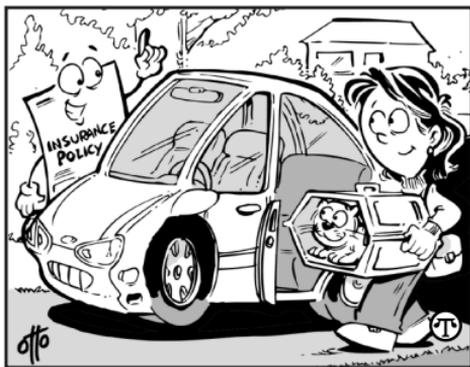
(NAPSA)—It may seem harmless to answer a quick call, grab a bite to eat or let your dog ride in your lap when you're behind the wheel. But in 2008, accidents caused by distracted drivers injured about 515,000 people.

It takes two hands, a sharp eye and your full attention to safely drive your car. Anything that keeps you from doing so means you're driving while distracted, or "DWD."

There are some simple ways to kick DWD habits. Follow these four tips to steer clear of distraction:

**1. Hit the "off" button.** According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, for every 4.6 seconds spent texting behind the wheel, drivers travel the length of a football field—without looking up. Talking on your cell phone delays your reaction time, even if you use a hands-free model. Your e-mail, voice mail and return calls can wait until after the trip. So turn off your phone.

**2. Eat up before you start up.** An Exxon survey of 1,000 drivers showed that more than 70 percent liked to use their steering wheels as tray tables and 83 percent used their center consoles as beverage carts. To drive with your hands firmly on the wheel and avoid staining your new shirt, save the burgers, tacos and cups of coffee for your home or office.



**Don't drive with pets roaming free in your car. Keep them safely in a harness or a crate to stay safe on the road.**

**3. Pull over.** Maps and GPS systems are handy tools to get you from point A to point B. When you need to check your grid or change your destination, take the next exit or stop at the nearest rest area. Pulling over on the side of the road is a dangerous and unsafe alternative.

**4. Keep 'em caged.** Keep all your passengers safe by securing your pets in a harness or a crate. They remain in one place, freeing you to focus on what's in front of you rather than the rearview mirror.

To learn more on how to avoid DWD, visit [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov).

Keeping your driving record free from accidents and citations can help lower your car insurance rates, point out the experts at Progressive. For more information or to find a nearby agent, visit [www.progressiveagent.com](http://www.progressiveagent.com).