

Tips To Avoid Being Driven To Distraction

(NAPSA)—Texting while driving has received a great deal of attention lately, and with good reason: Keeping your eyes on a tiny keyboard rather than the roadway ahead is a disaster waiting to happen. However, texting is just the latest in a long list of distractions that could have deadly consequences on America's roadways.

"Safe driving is about focus," said Bill Moore, president of MetLife Auto & Home®. "Many accidents could be avoided if the basic principles of defensive driving and driver attentiveness were observed."

To stay focused on safety, drivers may want to ask themselves the following questions:

- **Are you keeping your eyes on the prize?** With cars more than ever resembling mobile offices and entertainment centers, it can be easy to forget you're behind the wheel. Most accidents occur in seconds and distractions delay your reaction time.

- **Are you awake enough to drive?** Driver fatigue leads to inattentiveness, and according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 100,000 crashes are caused each year by drivers literally being asleep at the wheel. Recognize the signs of drowsy driving, which include difficulty focusing, frequent blinking, irritability and frequent yawning—and then, take action.

- **Are you more interested in your cell phone conversation than the road ahead?** Even in states where it's permissible, talking on a cell phone increases the likelihood of getting involved in a motor vehicle accident. If you need to call, pull off the road.

- **Do you have a designated deejay?** Simple things like chang-



Distractions, including cell phone usage, can greatly increase the likelihood of being involved in an accident.

ing the radio dial or finding that "perfect song" on your MP3 player may seem harmless, but they can be a big distraction.

- **Are you being lazy about changing lanes?** It's critical to look briefly over both shoulders before changing lanes. Even if you have onboard technology installed in the car, such as blind-spot and rearview indicators, the basics you learned in driver's education will always apply: signal your intention, check your mirrors and then glance back both ways to be certain that no one—or nothing—is in your blind spot.

- **Are you day driving or daydreaming?** Even without external distractions, it's easy to get caught up thinking about personal problems or work assignments. If you feel yourself losing focus, give yourself a wake-up call and set aside your problems. They can wait until the ride is over.

For the free brochures "Driving While Distracted: Be a Safer Driver" and "In the Driver's Seat: About Driving Safely," call (800) 608-0190.

For more information, visit www.metlife.com.