MediaRoom

Farmers Insurance® Finds More Than Half of Drivers Admit to Using Cell Phones While Behind The Wheel; Shares Focused Driving Tips

Consumer survey data reveals significant disconnect between safe driving beliefs and practices

WOODLAND HILLS, Calif., April 1, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- The vast majority of drivers understand the danger cell phones present on our roadways, but survey data from Farmers Insurance® reveals a significant gap between this belief and drivers' actual behavior. According to the survey, 87 percent of drivers surveyed believe that people who use their phone behind the wheel pose a danger to others. Yet, 53 percent of those drivers admit to making a call behind the wheel and 45 percent admit to sending, reading or receiving a text message.[1]

Gen Z and Millennial drivers surveyed also admitted to participating in video chats (32 percent collectively), posting to or viewing social media (28 percent), playing a game (27 percent) and streaming video (24 percent) while behind the wheel, suggesting younger drivers could face continued driving distractions as technology continues to evolve.

"It's understandable that today's drivers feel a conflict – people know that phones, and the distraction they introduce, pose a risk and can interfere with safe driving, however, phones can be tempting and pull our attention and focus," said Carolyn Wald head of product innovation integration for Farmers. "With April being National Distracted Driving Awareness Month we want to remind people that there are a few precautions and tools we can all use to help keep our attention focused where it belongs, and to help keep the roads safer for everyone."

Farmers offers its safe-driving app, Signal®, to help drivers recognize behaviors that may be taking their attention off the road and earn a discount for focused driving.[2] The insurer also recently launched CrashAssist within the Signal app, a feature that can detect crashes and help connect drivers to emergency and support services. Signal users can receive push notifications should a crash be detected then be connected with emergency services, and get help reporting a claim.

After 2020 saw an 8 percent spike in traffic fatalities according to the National Safety Council, this month's observance of National Distracted Driving Awareness Month hits even closer to home as all drivers share a responsibility to practice focused driving when behind the wheel. Wald recommends the following tips to help people stay safe when they hit the road:

Make your car a "no phone zone": It may seem like a no-brainer but limiting mobile phone use is one of the easiest ways to become a more focused driver. And don't forget, hands-free calling and voice texting can still be a distraction while you're on the road. If you find it helpful, use an app to silence phone calls and texts when you're behind the wheel.

Multitask later: The last place you should be multitasking is behind the wheel of a car. Avoid eating, glancing at your calendar, searching for dropped items or anything else that can take your attention away from the road.

Chat light: Take a cue from the 33 percent of those surveyed who believe that talking to passengers, including those in the back seat, poses a danger to others on the road[3]. Save serious conversations and important news with passengers for when you're off the road. Instead, keep the chatter light so you can focus on the road ahead.

Buckle up children and pets: Make sure children and pets are properly secured in their seats before starting the ignition. In many cases, the safest place for your children and four-legged passengers is in the back seat of the car.

Park it: Always pull over and park in a safe place before adjusting controls in your car, tending to a pet or child, sending a text or talking on your phone.

Get an app for that: Consider downloading an app that rewards you for focused driving behaviors, like Signal from Farmers.

Households who enroll in Signal will automatically have access to CrashAssist. A Signal discount is also available in some states.For more information, visit: https://www.farmers.com/signal/.

About Farmers Insurance

"Farmers Insurance®" and "Farmers®" are tradenames for a group of insurers providing insurance for automobiles, homes and small businesses and a wide range of other insurance and financial services products. For more information about Farmers Insurance, visit Farmers.com, Twitter and Instagram, @WeAreFarmers, or Facebook.com/FarmersInsurance.

[1,3]Data from a CARAVAN® survey conducted by ENGINE INSIGHTS among a sample of 1,004 adults 18 years of age and older. The online omnibus study is conducted three times a week among a demographically representative U.S. sample of 1,000 adults 18 years of age and older. This survey was live on March 2-4, 2020.

[2] SIGNAL® AND THE SIGNAL DISCOUNT ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN HI, NY, & SC.
SIGNAL DISCOUNT IS NOT AVAILABLE IN CA.
SIGNAL IS AVAILABLE WITH FARMERS® BRANDED SMART PLAN AUTOMOBILE POLICIES. Subject to terms and conditions. Products not available in every state.

Contact:
External Communications
Farmers Insurance
818-965-0007
reporterhotline@farmersinsurance.com

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