

CLANCY & DIAZ, LLP
PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEYS

Distraction a Common Cause of Parking Lot Accidents

Accidents happen all the time on California's busy roads and highways, but parking lots and garages also pose a risk to drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Supermarkets, retail stores, shopping plazas, and malls all typically have parking lots or garages that are busy with both motor vehicle and pedestrian foot traffic. Unfortunately, this makes them a prime location for accidents that can result in severe injury or death.

According to a recent National Safety Council public opinion poll, distracted driving is often to blame.

Opinion Poll Sheds Light on the Problem

Those who participated in the opinion poll were asked about their driving behaviors in different scenarios. Many motorists admitted to taking part in distracting activities while driving in parking lots, including:

- Using a cellphone to make or answer calls
- Programming or adjusting a GPS/navigation system
- Using a digital music device
- Reading and sending texts
- Checking smartphone notifications
- Self-grooming
- Using social media apps
- Reading and sending emails
- Taking videos and/or photos from their smartphone

People driving through a parking lot are often in a rush, which creates a dangerous situation. For instance, someone walking in a parking lot can get hit by a car and suffer severe injuries—9% of pedestrian deaths in parking lots take place when drivers are backing up.

Slip and Falls Also Pose a Risk

Not only do pedestrians have to avoid inattentive drivers in parking lots, but they also are at risk of suffering an injury when they trip, slip, or fall due to hazardous conditions on the property (e.g., poor lighting, debris, uneven pavement, loose gravel, etc.). All property owners have a legal responsibility to keep their premises maintained and reasonably safe for customers. When they fail to do so, they put others at risk of injury.

Talk to a Lawyer About Your Legal Options

Whether you were hit by a car in a parking lot, involved in a crash with another motor vehicle, or got hurt in a slip and fall, you have the right to seek compensation for your losses. To get a clear understanding of your legal rights and options after a parking lot accident, contact our law firm for a free consultation with an experienced personal injury attorney.



California Has **2nd Most** Crashes Involving Young Drivers Over the Last Decade

Safety Tips for Young Drivers

For younger drivers, the state offers long lists of tips for preventing accidents, including:

- Proper signaling and turning: Remember to use turn signals and know your hand signals.
- Safe backing: Check your mirrors and don't back up around corners or sharp curves. Make sure you can turn your car left or right while backing up.
- Driving through intersections: Always obey traffic control signals and don't speed up to beat a yellow light before it turns red.
- Maintaining a safe distance from other vehicles: Give other drivers enough room and don't tailgate.
- Adjusting speed to traffic conditions: Weather events such as rain, fog, and snow can reduce visibility, make roads slick, and cause other hazards.
- Freeway driving: Use your signals, check your blind spots, obey the speed limit, and adjust your driving for the roadway conditions.
- Share the road: Watch the sides and middle of the road for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other road users. When an emergency vehicle has its sirens activated, pull over to the right side of the road and let the emergency vehicle pass before you resume driving.

When it comes to driving a motor vehicle, there is no substitute for experience behind the wheel. That's a major reason why so many car accidents in California involve younger drivers—and a new study shows these types of accidents have been a problem in our state for years.

Too Young to Drive?

Young California drivers (ages 15 to 20) were involved in more car accidents from 2010 to 2019 - a total of 3,617 - than any state other than Texas (4,278).

Nationally, the total was 41,187 auto accidents for the age group. The numbers were compiled by ValuePenguin, a personal finance website, based on its analysis of the most recent available crash data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Sadly, the trend of accidents involving young drivers in California worsened over the decade, jumping 8%, compared to a 14% drop across the nation.

Legal Help is Available

If you were injured in an accident caused by a younger driver (or anyone else who was being negligent), you have recourse through the civil justice system, but the process isn't always easy. To find out how we can help with your potential legal case, contact us today for a free consultation. We proudly serve clients in Walnut Creek, Antioch, and throughout the Bay Area.



CA Records Highest Rate of **Hit-and-Run** Fatalities in the U.S.

What Is a Hit-and-Run?

A hit-and-run involves a driver who strikes a person, another vehicle, or an object and leaves the scene of the crash knowingly without exchanging information. A driver who flees the crash scene in California could face legal consequences.

The driver could be charged with a misdemeanor if he or she leaves the scene of an accident where there is no injury. If someone is injured and a driver flees, that driver could face a felony charge which could lead to a state prison sentence.

Why Do Drivers Flee?

A responsible driver knows to stay at the scene of an accident and exchange information. In some cases, a driver might need to call an ambulance to help someone who is injured. There are many other reasons why it's important to stay at the scene. But some people decide to run after causing an accident.

Here are some of the top reasons:

- The driver was drunk or impaired by drugs
- The driver was facing legal problems and does not want to talk to the police
- The driver was uninsured or did not have a license in California
- The driver was undocumented and does not want to risk deportation

If you're involved in a hit-and-run, do not attempt to follow or chase the other driver. This is for your safety. Instead, call the police and try to give them as many details as you can about the driver and their vehicle.

California topped the nation for the deadliest hit-and-run car accidents between 2010 and 2019, according to a new report by ValuePenguin.

Unfortunately, hit-and-run crashes are becoming more frequent in every state. Shockingly, California accounted for 17 percent of the total hit-and-runs in the nation.

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How Can an Attorney Help?

With a hit-and-run, the driver who fled may never be located, which means you will have to work with your insurance company to cover your losses. In some cases, your insurance company may argue with you over your coverage and policy limits.

This is when it's time to contact an experienced car accident lawyer for a free consultation. At Clancy & Diaz, LLP, our attorneys put experience and resources to work for clients. We know how to negotiate a settlement to maximize compensation. And if the insurance company isn't willing to settle for a fair amount, we are not afraid to take the fight to court.

Call us to learn more about how we can help you with your potential legal case.