

CLANCY & DIAZ, LLP
PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEYS

Distracted Driving : A Growing Concern on America's Roads

As technology continues to advance, the number of distractions behind the wheel has only increased, leading to a deadly epidemic on our roads. In one recent year, over 3,000 lives were lost to distracted driving.

Texting and driving may be the most well-known form of distracted driving, but it is far from the only one. Conversations on cellphones or with passengers, adjusting in-car technology, self-grooming, and even simply drinking a cup of coffee can all take a driver's focus away from the road, putting themselves and others in danger of a car accident.

In recognition of this growing problem, April has been designated "Distracted Driving Awareness Month," a nationwide effort to raise awareness and educate the public on the dangers of driving while distracted. With simple steps such as putting away your phone while driving and remaining attentive, we can all help make our roads safer.

Promoting Safe Driving

As Distracted Driving Awareness Month begins, it is an opportune time to reflect on the responsibilities of operating a motor vehicle. With simple steps such as putting away your phone while driving and remaining attentive, we can all help make our roads safer.



Here are some tips for responsible driving:

- If you need to look at your phone, park or pull over in a safe location before doing so. Never text and drive. If it's not worth stopping your car, then it can wait until the end of the drive.
- If you must respond to a call or message, consider appointing a passenger as your "designated texter." Let them handle your phone for you.
- Avoid scrolling through apps or social media while driving. The temptation to use your phone can be strong, but it's not worth putting yourself and others in danger.
- If you find it difficult to resist the urge to use your phone while driving, try putting your device in the trunk, glove box, or back seat of the vehicle until you arrive at your destination. By following these simple tips, we can all help make our roads safer.

Continued on page 4

**APRIL IS
DISTRACTED DRIVING
AWARENESS MONTH**





Understanding the Rise in California Pedestrian Accidents

In California, the problem of pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways is becoming increasingly severe. Despite efforts to promote walking as a healthy, positive, and community-building alternative to driving, the reality is that pedestrians are always at risk.

The Office of Traffic Safety, in partnership with the State Transportation Agency, Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and concerned organizations and advocates across the state, is working to bring awareness to the dangers that pedestrians face on California's roadways.

The Problem Has Reached 'Crisis Proportions'

The problem of pedestrian fatalities on California's roadways has reached "crisis proportions." For instance, in one recent year, 893 pedestrians were killed on the state's roadways, while another 14,000-plus were injured.

In the last decade, nearly **7,500 pedestrians have lost their lives on California's roads**. While this is partially a function of California's high population, the state's pedestrian fatality rate is also alarmingly high, almost 25% higher than the national average.

How to Prevent Pedestrian Accidents

To help reduce the number of pedestrian accidents, the California Office of Traffic Safety offers the following safety tips for pedestrians and drivers.

For Pedestrians:

- **Make yourself visible:** Wear bright clothing or carry a flashlight when walking at night to improve your visibility.
- **Practice safe behavior:** Always use sidewalks, avoid jaywalking, and make eye contact with drivers to ensure they see you.
- **Stay alert:** Avoid using your phone while walking, as it can distract you from paying attention to your surroundings.
- **Cross with caution:** Use marked crosswalks or intersections and obey traffic signals to ensure a safe crossing.
- **Look before you step:** Always check for turning vehicles before crossing a street.
- **Take care of children:** Children under 10 should not be allowed to cross the street on their own.

For Drivers:

- **Maintain a safe speed:** Follow the speed limit and be mindful of your surroundings.
- **Avoid distractions:** Never use your phone while driving, and keep your attention focused on the road.
- **Don't drink and drive:** Never operate a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- **Watch out for pedestrians:** Be especially cautious when driving in difficult conditions, such as at night or in inclement weather.
- **Yield to pedestrians:** Always yield to pedestrians at crosswalks and intersections and be prepared to stop.
- **Back up with care:** Always be mindful of pedestrians when backing up, especially young children who may move across your path.

Talk to a Pedestrian Accident Attorney About Your Rights

At Clancy & Diaz, LLP, we are equipped to handle complex cases and provide dedicated representation to those who have been injured due to the negligence of others. Contact our office today to learn more about how our legal team can help you.



Common Causes of Motorcycle Accidents

In the Bay Area and throughout Southern California, the love of motorcycle riding knows no bounds. With its sunny skies and picturesque routes, it's no wonder that thousands of motorcyclists hit the road every year.

However, as exhilarating as motorcycle riding can be, the roads here also pose serious risks to riders. According to federal data, California sees a yearly average of over 500 deaths due to motorcycle accidents, with a rate of 59 to 68 fatal crashes per 100,000 registered motorcycles.

Motorcyclists, who are particularly vulnerable on the road, have the right to travel safely. However, to help ensure their safety, all drivers must take necessary precautions and be held accountable when they fail to do so. In such cases, a motorcycle accident attorney can provide crucial legal support.

What Are the Different Types of Motorcycle Accidents?

In California, motorcycles are involved in approximately 15 percent of all fatal traffic accidents annually. Analysis has revealed that many of these incidents are caused by speeding and occur at intersections.

Two of the most prevalent types of motorcycle accidents are when another vehicle turns in front of a bike and when a bike runs off the road to avoid a bigger collision, also known as "laying down," "dumping," or "ditching the bike."

Another common type of motorcycle accident is a sideswipe, frequently caused by drivers failing to check blind spots before changing lanes.

Other motorcycle accidents include rear-enders, sudden U-turns or Y-turns by another vehicle, and incidents involving passing by both other drivers and motorcycle riders.

How to Avoid Hitting a Motorcyclist

All drivers have a duty to ensure the safety of others on the roadways. When it comes to avoiding motorcycle collisions, it is crucial for drivers of cars and trucks to exercise extra caution.

To minimize the occurrence of accidents between cars and motorcycles, the Department of Motor Vehicles recommends the following for other motorists:

- Always check blind spots before entering a major road or changing lanes, using mirrors to attain the fullest possible view.
- Maintain a following distance of at least 4 seconds from motorcycles. Remember, a motorcycle has a much shorter stopping distance than a car.
- Where feasible, move over to allow motorcyclists more room when passing.
- Before making a turn, assess the speed of any approaching motorcycles to avoid a collision.
- Before opening car doors while parked or pulled over near moving traffic, look for motorcycles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other vehicles.
- Look twice for motorcycles before making a left turn.

We Stand Up for Injured Riders

If you or a loved one suffered injuries from a motorcycle accident in the East Bay, it is crucial to take swift action and consult with a motorcycle accident lawyer to review your potential legal options for compensation. Find out what our law firm can do for you.

CLANCY & DIAZ, LLP

PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEYS

3000 Citrus Circle, Suite 215
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

(925) 835-7500

2006 A Street, Suite 223
Antioch, CA 94509

(925) 667-3659

420 Railroad Avenue, Suite 210
Pittsburg, CA 94565

(925) 568-8707



This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury and other issues. It is for information purposes only and is not intended to be legal advice. Prior to acting on any information contained here, you should seek and retain competent counsel. The information in this newsletter may be freely copied and distributed as long as the newsletter is copied in its entirety.



Continued from page 1

Distracted Driving: A Growing Concern on America's Roads

The Consequences of Distracted Driving

During Distracted Driving Awareness Month, you may see increased law enforcement on the roadways as part of the national paid media campaign "U Drive. U Text. U Pay." This campaign reminds drivers of the dangers and the legal consequences - including fines - of texting behind the wheel.

Under California law, drivers are prohibited from talking or texting on their cell phones unless they are connected to a hands-free device, or the driver is in an emergency situation and needs to use the phone to call law enforcement, an ambulance, or another emergency services agency.

Crash Victims May Be Eligible for Compensation

The aftermath of a crash can be a devastating experience, particularly when another driver's negligence caused the accident. If you or a loved one were hit by a distracted driver in the Bay Area, you have the right to seek compensation for your losses—and we know how to help.

To learn more about your potential legal options, **Contact us today for a free case evaluation.**