



# WESTPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT

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## News Release



### **Westport Police Department to Participate in April's High Visibility Distracted Driving Enforcement Campaign**

(Westport, CT 4/1/2022) – Today, the Connecticut Department of Transportation Highway Safety Office launched *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.*, a national high-visibility enforcement campaign for National Distracted Driving Awareness Month in April. The Westport Police, in partnership with State and local law enforcement, as well as the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) will step up efforts to enforce distracted-driving laws from April 1 to April 30, 2022.

In 2020, there were nearly 5,000 crashes in Connecticut attributed to distracted driving. Further, according to NHTSA, between 2012 and 2019, 26,004 people died nationwide in crashes involving a distracted driver.

Since 2015, Connecticut has been measuring rates of distracted driving. August 2021 saw the highest rate of drivers either texting or talking on a hand-held cell phone since the first round of observations in March 2015.

“It has become all too common to see people driving while looking at their phones,” said Connecticut Department of Transportation Commissioner Joseph Giulietti. People know that texting and driving is extremely dangerous and illegal, but they continue to do it anyway. These habits are putting motorists and passengers, pedestrians, bikers, and all road users at risk. Every driver in Connecticut has a responsibility to drive safe.”

*April 1, 2022*

Connecticut law prohibits the use of any hand-held mobile electronic device while operating a motor vehicle. Drivers who are 16 or 17 years of age are prohibited from using a cell phone or mobile device at any time, even with a hands-free accessory.

In addition to being dangerous, violating Connecticut's distracted driving laws can also be costly. Drivers who are ticketed are fined \$200 for the first offense, \$375 for the second offense, and \$625 for the third and subsequent offenses.

The Connecticut Department of Transportation and the Westport Police urges motorists to put their phone down when they get behind the wheel. If you are driving a vehicle and need to text, pull over and park the vehicle in a safe place first.

For more information, visit [distraction.gov](https://www.distraction.gov).

END

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 1, 2022**

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