



National City Police Department
1200 National City Blvd
National City, CA 91950



NEWS ADVISORY

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The National City Police Department challenges drivers to “silence” the distraction

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

National City, Calif. — April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month and The National City Police Department will be joining law enforcement agencies statewide stopping drivers who violate California’s hands-free cell phone law.

During the month of April, The National City Police Department will have additional officers working operations looking specifically for drivers on their phones.

Last year, The National City Police Department issued 215 citations to drivers texting, calling, or performing another function on their phone. Distracted driving is dangerous, especially when it involves a cell phone. According to preliminary data from the California Highway Patrol (CHP), 66 people were killed and more than 6,500 injured in 2017 from distracted driving-related crashes.

A 2018 [observational survey](#) by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) on driver cell phone use found about 4.5 percent of drivers are still using their cell phone illegally, a nearly 27 percent increase from 2016.

“One text or call could end it all”, said National City Police Department Sergeant Matt Smith. “Your safest option is to stay off the phone when you are driving a vehicle.”

Under the most recent cell phone law that went into effect in 2017, drivers are prohibited from having a phone in their hand for any reason and can only use their phone in a hands-free manner. The phones must be mounted on the dashboard, windshield or center console, and can only be touched once with the swipe or tap of a finger to activate or deactivate a function. First-time offenders face a [\\$162 fine](#).

If you need to make a call or text someone, pull over and park at a safe location. Struggling to stay off the phone while driving? Put your phone in a place you can’t reach, like the backseat or trunk.

Funding for distracted driving enforcement operations are provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

MEDIA NOTES: To schedule an interview regarding the National City Police Department Traffic Safety Operations, please contact **Sergeant Matt Smith** at (619) 336-4438 or via email at msmith@nationalcityca.gov

