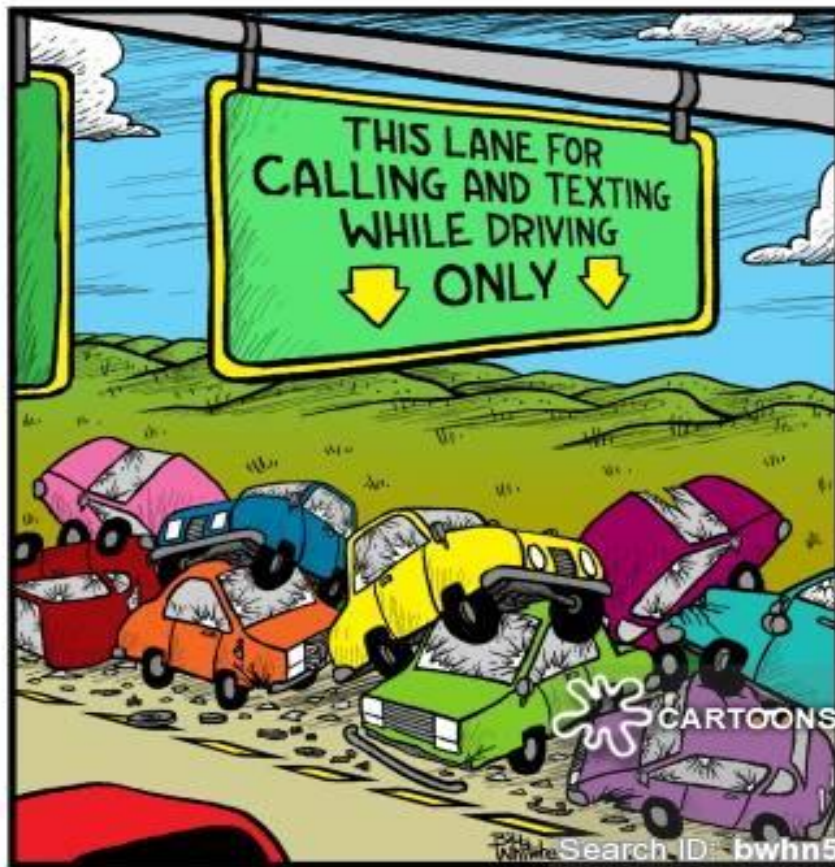


# TAKING ACTION AGAINST CMV DRIVER DISTRACTION

CMV Driver Education Programs can  
Target the Driving Population in  
Training Schools Before They Hit the  
Road



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## History of New England Tractor Trailer Training School (NETTTS)

NETTTS has been in business for over 50 years, training men and women from across the New England states. NETTTS has 4 locations throughout New England, including:

- North Andover, MA
- Pawtucket, RI
- Bridgeport, CT
- Somers, CT

Each year NETTTS' locations train between 3 to 4 thousand Commercial Drivers. Many of these students take jobs with major trucking companies as well as smaller, localized companies. Many must go through a finishing program once they accept employment with their chosen company.

NETTTS is a Nationally Accredited Institution and offers it's students financial aid options to pay for their training if they qualify. Each location is also licensed by the state in which they do business.





# Commercial Vehicle Training Association (CVTA)

The CVTA is the largest trade association representing the interest of commercial truck driving schools and their students across North America. Its mission is to promote excellence in training, develop safety in the transportation industry, and enhance driver professionalism. It is comprised of 200 member schools operating in 43 states, 20 motor carrier members, and trains over 50,000 drivers each year.



# Taking Action Against CMV Driver Distraction From a Training Point of View

Driving distractions have been around as long as the act of driving. Distractions from the good old days are nothing compared to what's capturing our attention today. We at NETTTS try to educate the future CMV Operator on how to limit distractions while operating commercial and personal motor vehicles so that it becomes second nature.

# Identifying Distracted Drivers

How many people have ever been distracted while they are driving?

Ask yourself the following questions:

While driving, have you ever...

- adjusted your climate controls?
- eaten or drank?
- consulted a paper map?
- set or reset your GPS?
- tuned the radio?
- sent a text message?
- received or placed a phone call?
- been distracted by a bee or an insect?
- groomed yourself or applied make up?
- read a billboard?
- been distracted by an accident that occurred nearby?
- had an in depth conversation with your passengers?



It's unlikely that all driving distractions will be eliminated entirely, but to minimize these distractions, we need to:

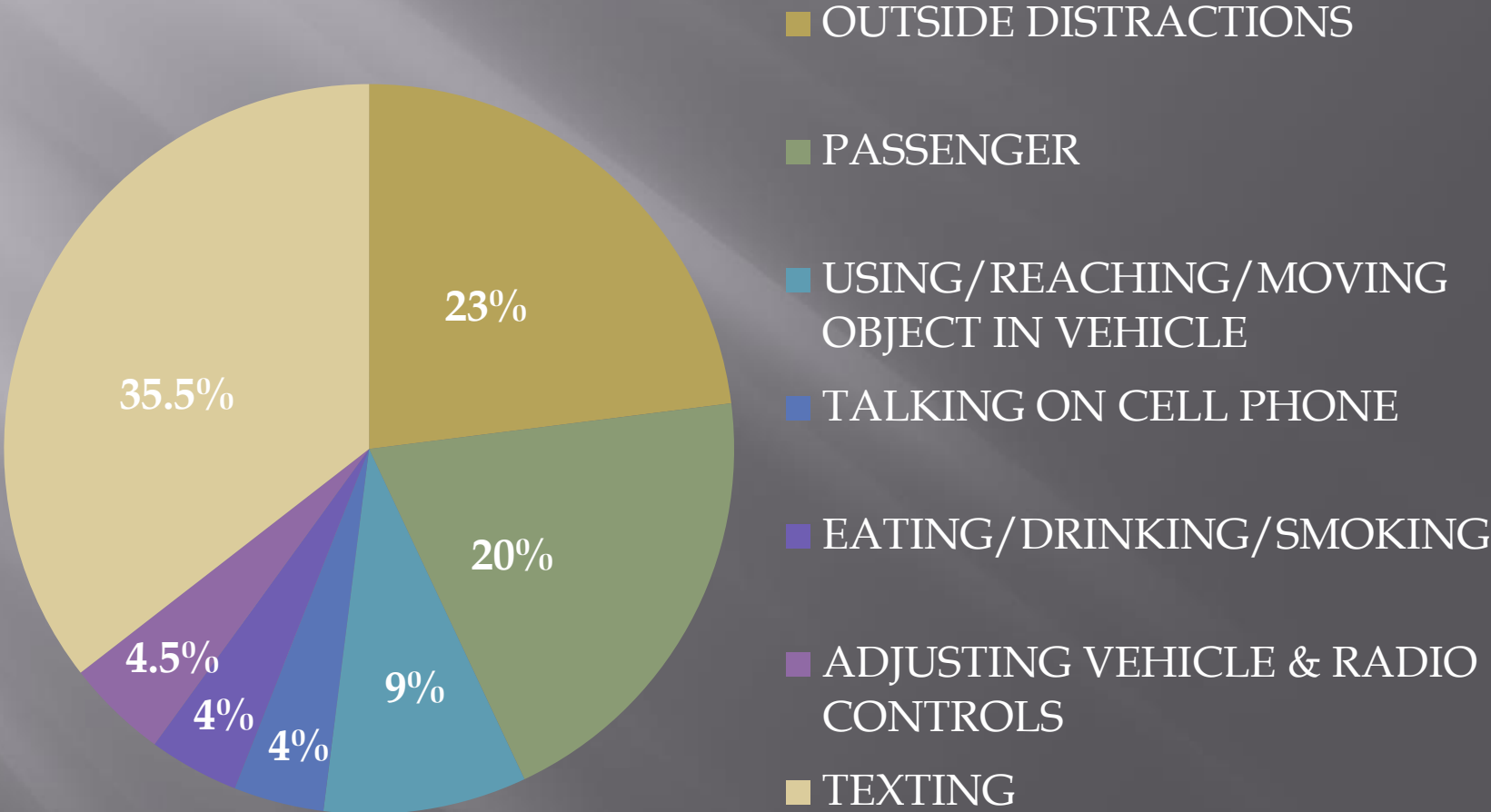
- Commit to not driving while distracted.
- Watch out for other distracted drivers and respond appropriately once a distracted driver has been identified.

The first step in fighting distracted driving is hazard awareness. Distractions are everywhere, and with the increased technology today distractions have more than doubled in the past 20 years.



What kinds of distractions most often lead to crashes? According to the National Highway Safety Administration (N.H.T.S.A.) here is a snapshot of the distractions that most often lead to crashes:

### DISTRACTIONS



Texting is one of the deadliest distractions we can participate in or encounter. Some experts regard texting as being more of a driving hazard than drunk driving.

Research shows that the odds of being involved in a safety critical event (meaning a crash, near crash, or drifting out of your lane) is greater for CMV drivers who text while driving.



# Visual, Physical, and Mental Distractions

Distractions can be placed into 4 basic categories:

- 1) Visual – the types of distractions that lure our eyes off of the road.
- 2) Physical – those that trigger us to take our hand(s) off the wheel.
- 3) Mental – when your mind wanders to something other than driving.
- 4) Inattention Blindness – when you have no recollection of the last few miles. At times, we tend to go on auto pilot when performing highly practiced activities such as driving.

# Some Statistics to Ponder

According to the N.H.T.S.A. in 2009:

- 448,000 people were injured in crashes that involved distracted driving.
- 5,474 people were killed in crashes caused by distracted driving.
- Of those 5,474 people, 995 of them were killed while using a cell phone in some capacity.
- About 3 billion cell phone calls are made everyday. It's safe to assume that many of these calls are made while operating a motor vehicle.

It's likely that these statistics would be much higher if the whole story was told.

# Distracted Driving Strategies

- 1) Stay focused on driving. Don't get sucked in by a distraction.
- 2) Recognize the signs of a distracted driver and be aware of what's going on around your vehicle.
- 3) Don't ignore a distracted driver. Manage them instead.





Let's take a closer look at these 3 strategies:

## 1) Stay focused on driving:

- Preprogram your GPS.
- Tune the radio before heading out.
- Make any necessary phone calls/text messages.
- Check your directions and/or instructions.

If during the course of your trip, you need to reset your GPS, retune your radio, make an important phone call or send a text message, the strategy is simple: Pull over and deal with it, or wait until your next scheduled stop.

Many times students do not understand the importance of never taking their eyes off of the road, even if it may only be for a few seconds. We help them to understand how much ground can be covered in a few seconds. For example, a tractor trailer travelling at 65 MPH would cover about 500 feet in that time. Being distracted while driving for even a few seconds can pose a great hazard.

## 2) Recognize the signs of a distracted driver:

- Action in the driver's seat
- Excessive speed
- Slow speed
- Erratic speed
- Cutting off other drivers
- Violating traffic rules
- Tailgating

Any of these signs can also be a sign of road rage, which can be just as dangerous or even more so than distracted driving.



### 3) Don't ignore a distracted driver:

Recognizing another distracted driver is a good start, but it is only part of the process with this type of hazard. Some strategies would be:

- Increase your following distance. At 55 MPH in good conditions you need about 1 second of distance for every 10 feet of vehicle length between you and another vehicle.
- If you suspect you are sharing the road with a distracted driver, double your following distance to 2 seconds for every 10 feet of your vehicle's length.

\*How to calculate distance in seconds: For a truck traveling 55 MPH you would allow 1 second of distance for every 10 feet of your vehicle's length. For example, a tractor trailer with a 15 foot tractor and a 48 foot trailer would need about 6.5 seconds stopping distance .\*

$$(15 + 48 = 63 / 10 = 6.3)$$

- Create a safety cushion between you and the distracted driver.
- If all else fails, pull over at the earliest and safest opportunity and allow the distracted driver to get ahead of you.

## Things you should never do:

- Sound your horn.
- Flashing your lights.
- Make rude or threatening gestures.

This could lead to a road rage situation.



# Defensive Driver Training Certification

NETTTS trains students who come through the core 600 hour program as well as companies that request refresher programs for their seasoned veteran drivers on Defensive Driver Training, as well as Distracted Driver Training.

NETTTS is certified by the National Safety Council to provide 4 and 8 hour Certification Programs to both beginner and seasoned, veteran, commercial drivers.





TM

***Safety & Health Council  
of Northern New England***