

# LOCUST VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT – PUBLIC SAFETY TIPS



## Safe Driving - It's Your Call

If you drive with a cell phone, avoid unnecessary calls and always make the driving task your top priority. Here are a few basic safety tips:

### **Keep Your Hands on the Wheel.**

Buckle your seat-belt and place all ten fingers on the steering wheel. Wrap them firmly around it, positioned at "10 and 2 o'clock" and keep them there while you drive.

### **Keep Your Eyes on the Road.**

Learn how to operate your phone without looking at it. Memorize the location of all the controls, so you can press the buttons you need without ever taking your eyes off the road.

### **Practice Off-Road.**

If your phone is new, practice using it and the voice mail while your car is stopped. Practice will make you feel more comfortable - and safe - using it when you are on the road.

### **Use a Hands-Free Model.**

A hands-free unit lets you keep both hands on the wheel while you talk on the phone. Attach the microphone to the visor just above your line of vision, so you can keep your eyes on the road. You can then talk on the phone as if you were talking to a passenger.

### **Stay in Your Lane.**

Don't get so wrapped up in a conversation that you drift into the other lane. Pull into the right-hand lane while talking, so you only have to worry about traffic to the left.

### **Use Speed Dialing.**

Program frequently called numbers and your local emergency number into the speed dial feature of your phone for easy, one-touch dialing. When available, use auto answer or voice-activated dialing.

### **Never Dial While Driving.**

If you must dial manually, do so only when stopped. Pull off the road, or better yet have a passenger dial for you.

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## **Take a Message.**

Let your voice mail pick up your calls in tricky driving situations. It's easy to retrieve your messages later on.

## **Know When to Stop Talking.**

Keep conversations brief so you can concentrate on your driving. If a long discussion is required, if the topic is stressful or emotional, or if driving becomes hazardous, end your call and continue when you're not in traffic.

## **Keep the Phone in its Holder.**

Make sure your phone is securely in its holder when you are not using it. That way it won't pop out and distract you when you are driving.

## **Don't Take Notes While Driving.**

If you need to take something down, use a tape recorder or pull off the road. If you have an electronic scratch pad on your phone, use it to record numbers while you are talking.

## **Be a Wireless Samaritan.**

Wireless enables you to report crimes, life-threatening emergencies, collisions or drunk drivers.

## **Drive Defensively.**

Being in the right will not save you from a crash. You must be prepared for the unsafe actions of other motorists or for poor driving conditions.