



Zero fatalities. Zero excuses.

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**Law Enforcement on Alert for Texting While Driving During *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.***  
*The statewide enforcement campaign begins April 1*

WILLISTON, N.D. – In an effort to make North Dakota roads safer, law enforcement across the state will be on alert for those drivers texting while driving during the nationwide *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.* enforcement campaign from April 1-30. Last year nearly 400 citations were issued in North Dakota for distracted drivers during the state’s two enforcement periods (April and September).

Composing, reading or sending any electronic message or using a communications device to access the Internet while driving is illegal in North Dakota for drivers of all ages, and is punishable with a fine of \$100. The law applies to any driver of a vehicle in a traffic lane, even while stopped at a red light or in a construction zone. Additionally, drivers under the age of 18 are prohibited from using **any** electronic communications devices, including cell phones, unless in an emergency. For 14 and 15 year-olds, this law carries a \$20 fine and 4 points on the driver’s record. For 16 and 17 year-olds, this law carries a \$20 fine and no points on the driver’s record.

“It’s important that drivers and passengers of all ages understand the importance of driving distraction-free,” Capt. Mike Ficken, McKenzie County Sheriff’s Office. “When it comes to texting while driving, you are six times more likely to cause a crash than a drunk driver. That is a powerful statistic we hope people take seriously which will motivate them to put their phones down when behind the wheel.”

While this enforcement period specifically targets texting while driving, it’s important to note that, in 2017, North Dakota expanded its distracted driving law to include all acts of distraction. If a driver is distracted by anything that impairs the ability to safely operate the vehicle and commits a traffic violation, that driver can be given a \$100 citation for distracted driving above any other fine for the traffic violation committed.

“With high visibility enforcement campaigns such as *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.*, we can move toward the goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries from motor vehicle crashes in North Dakota through the Vision Zero initiative,” said Karin Mongeon, NDDOT Safety Division Director. “However, this means everyone will need to take personal responsibility for their actions behind the wheel.”

Learn more about these and other traffic safety initiatives at [dot.nd.gov](http://dot.nd.gov), [VisionZero.ND.gov](http://VisionZero.ND.gov), or join the conversation on the Vision Zero ND [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) page.

View memorials of families who have lost a loved one due to a distracted driver by visiting the North Dakota Crash Memorial Wall at [VisionZero.ND.gov](http://VisionZero.ND.gov).

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