

SafetyCanada

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Don't Let Distraction Get In Your Way

Have you ever spilled hot coffee all over your lap while driving or missed a traffic signal because you were checking your text messages? It's easy to get distracted when you're behind the wheel. It can also be dangerous. Driver distraction is the number one cause of death in collisions before speed, seatbelt, and alcohol-related deaths.

Belairdirect is reminding drivers the importance of keeping driving the sole priority while behind the wheel. Below are five key tips to help drivers stay focused and safe while driving:

- **Keep your phone out of reach:** Avoid the temptation to read texts and answer phone calls by keeping your phone somewhere you can't hear or see it – the glove compartment, for example. If your car is Bluetooth-enabled, try not to answer phone calls unless they are urgent.
- **Avoid eating or drinking while the car is moving:** Food and drinks can be spilled, taking your attention away from the road at the worst moments. If you skipped breakfast or absolutely have to have your coffee right now, wait until your car is stopped at a light to take a sip or bite.
- **Keep music at a reasonable level:** Loud music can overwhelm your senses, leaving you less focussed. Set your volume so that it doesn't cover up the sounds of traffic around you or cloud your thinking. *(Continued on page 3)*



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President's Perspective: Fireworks

Our country is celebrating a milestone this month – perhaps you've heard? Canada Day 2017 marks the 150th year of the country we're all proud to call home. And, of course, a big milestone typically calls for a big celebration, one that will be accompanied by thousands of firework displays across the country.

Whether for Canada Day or at any point throughout the celebratory year, we recommend the displays that will be organized by professionals and displayed at community centres, landmarks and public gatherings as the safest way to enjoy fireworks. It combines all the awe and brilliance of the displays with a minimized amount of risk, relative to shows put on at home using purchased fireworks.

Many parties will still choose to put on home-grown displays. These can be impressive when done right, but safety always needs to come first. A fireworks display loses a lot of its fun when injury or property damage occurs. So, avoid these tragedies and take care to handle these displays safely.

First of all, only buy fireworks from reliable sources that meet safety standards. Illegal explosives or firecrackers might be cheaper, but they're far more likely to deploy incorrectly. Likewise, unless you're a trained professional, never attempt to make your own fireworks.

Next, before setting up your show, read and follow the instructions on each firework. These are instructions given by the firework manufacturer who, much like yourself, only wants their

product used in a safe and enjoyable way.

Set up your fireworks on a hard, level surface outdoors and away from any obstructions. The hard surface will ensure a more stable lighting platform and limit the odds of the firework flying off in an unexpected direction. Set up your fireworks with the wind blowing away from spectators so the sparks don't fly toward anyone.

Once everything is set up, store the fireworks you will not be using back in a closed box, away from the staging area. Have a supply of water, a bucket of sand and a fire extinguisher on hand in case, taking care to soak all used fireworks in water before throwing them out.

And of course, as common sense as this may sound, only adults who are not impaired by drugs or alcohol should be handling fireworks, lighting only one at a time and never holding a lit firework in their hand.

Be smart and use proper safety preparations. Enjoy the celebration and set off a memorable, safe fireworks show.

Safety, it's an attitude!

Jack Smith, President





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- **Map out your route ahead of time:** Taking a trip to a new destination? Make sure you know the way before you head out. You can still use your GPS to prompt you, but now you'll avoid being distracted by having to absorb new information and can focus on getting to where you need to be.
- **Make sure your passengers are occupied:** If you have kids in the car, give them something to do so that they can't distract you while you're driving. Books, games or videos will keep them entertained so you can focus on the road.

Adults can be distracting, too – so make sure that a lively conversation doesn't take your eyes off the road.

Distracted driving can cause collisions, potentially leading to injuries, costly repairs and increased insurance premiums. Keep these tips in mind when planning a road trip, or when simply making a quick trip to the grocery store. Limiting distractions could give drivers that extra second one may need to make a life-saving decision, and can go a long way towards making roadways safer for all.

Submitted by Alain Fortin, belairdirect, Road Safety Expert

Looking Ahead

Though no national campaigns are scheduled for the summer, safety issues never take a break... so neither will we! July, August and September typically offer topical issues including safe firework use, summer road trip precautions, skin care and heat stroke, children in hot cars and so much more. As you've come to expect from us, we'll be here to shed light on these important issues and share relevant information with Canadians from coast to coast.

The summer months also offer an excellent opportunity to remind road users of the importance of sharing the road, whether precautions are being taken as a driver, a motorcyclist, a cyclist, a pedestrian, a truck driver or as any other class of vulnerable road user. The good weather tends to be inviting for more open-air modes of transportation, which makes this type of messaging that much more crucial.



Healthy Living Starts in the Kitchen

(NC) As temperatures rise and we shed the bulky clothing, thoughts of healthier living come to mind. These days we're seeing fewer fad diets and quick fixes as we start to understand it's all about balance and moderation.

Healthy living isn't a sprint, but a long-distance journey that requires commitment and honesty with yourself. It's about finding the things that work for your life and will make it easier to add new better habits to your everyday routine. Here are a few tips and tricks to help with a seamless transition to a healthier you:

1. Do what feels natural and makes you happy. Everyone has their own preferences — some like workout classes, some like at-home Zumba, some like the challenge of developing new and healthy recipes. Find the practices that fit your life and give you a sense of accomplishment. New habits will never stick if they continue to feel like a chore.



2. Control what you can. Think about the daily temptations we face, like office parties with lots of cake or dinner with friends, and decide which parts of your day you can control. Packing your own lunch for work, or simply not buying junk food to have in the house are great ways to control your environment. We all face situations where unhealthy options present themselves, so be mindful of the moments that are completely in your control.

3. Have the right things on hand, both at home and in the office. We often remember to remove the junk from our reach, but what about adding cupboard staples that encourage healthier snacking? With many of us facing smaller pantries, food items that serve double-duty have never been more important. Keep an eye out for healthy alternatives to your favourite snack foods, including vegetable chips instead of potato chips and almond milk for healthier smoothies. Non-perishable foods will make the most of your pantry space.

High-Rise Fires: Are You at Risk?

A high-rise fire in London resulted in dozens of fatalities and injuries in mid-June, which of course prompted the question: how safe are we here in Canada?

The short answer is that Canada's building codes are among the most stringent in the world and include provisions for non-combustible construction materials that lead to more compartmentalized and isolated fires.

Current codes also account for functional building sprinklers in every room and hallway, as well as multiple routes to exit the building.

However, since some of these provisions came into place only in 2007, buildings built prior to this date only had to adhere to the regulations of the day. As a result, it's still very important to be mindful of the do's and don'ts of high-rise fire safety.

BEFORE A FIRE...

DO have a fully functional smoke alarm, ensuring to replace the batteries twice a year.

DO have a flashlight on hand, in case of a power outage, as well as duct tape or towels you will be able to soak to seal door cracks and prevent smoke from seeping through. If you hear a fire alarm, a smoke alarm, or notice a fire...

DURING A FIRE...

DO evacuate the building if you are in immediate danger.

DO feel the door handle and door to ensure

they are not hot before leaving. This may indicate that the fire is right outside your door and it's not safe to leave.

DO NOT jump out the window. Your odds of survival drastically decrease when jumping from the third floor or higher.

DO NOT stop to gather belongings or clothing before evacuating. Items are replaceable. Your life is not.

DO proceed in an orderly fashion down the staircase, gripping the handrail tightly.

DO NOT evacuate if the fire is located in a different part of the building and the building has functional sprinklers. If you are not in immediate danger, it's safer to stay put and let the firefighters handle the blaze.

If you do not evacuate the building...

DO call 911 and let them know about the fire. It's always better to ensure that emergency services have been notified than to incorrectly assume they are aware.

DO keep low to the floor and distance yourself from the source of the fire, preferably with a solid door between you and the fire. This will mitigate any smoke inhalation, which is a major cause of injury in high-rise fires.

DO listen to your building's public address system for further instructions.

DO NOT panic. If you stay calm and follow these tips, you'll be in a good place to mitigate damage before it happens.



Get Fired Up About Grilling

One of the most enjoyable things about the summer months is grilling up a meal on the barbecue. Whether that meal is hot dogs, steaks or veggie burgers, the start of summer always brings with it some required maintenance before you can get started.



Before firing up your grill this season, here are some basic precautions to take ahead of time. Check for damaged hoses. If your barbecue has been sitting idle over the winter, there's a possibility that a hose has developed a leak, which could result in an explosion in the wrong circumstances. Use a soapy water solution to check – if you see any bubbles, get the barbecue serviced by a professional. It's also highly recommended to replace cracked or damaged hoses even if they aren't leaking.

Blocked burners are also one of the leading causes of unexpected fires. Ensure that your burners are completely unobstructed and your briquettes are cleared of any grease buildup. Your grill should be set up outdoors in a well-ventilated area, on an even surface that will greatly reduce the odds of the barbecue tipping over, and away from windows, doors and any combustible materials including your house's siding.

Other useful tips to prevent gas explosions include leaving the lid up while lighting the grill, opening the gas before the burners when turning on the barbecue, and shutting off the gas before the burners once you're done. These steps help prevent gas build-up in the lines or the barbecue itself, leading to more clean operation of the barbecue.

Finally, ensure that all the meat you're cooking is cooked at the correct temperature. Insert a meat thermometer in the centre of the food item and consult this page for advisable temperatures.

Happy grilling!



Safety Training Online

Want to go back to school without leaving home?

Visit www.canadasafetycouncil.org/training

to sign up for online safety training! Courses include OH&S topics, defensive driving, babysitters training, and home alone safety.



Four Tips to Keep Your Kids Active this Summer

(NC) During the school break, most parents are looking for ways to get their kids enjoying the great outdoors. Before the final bell rings, here are four tips to keep your little ones active this vacation.

1. Take advantage of the nice weather. When it is -20C outside, it's only natural to want to stay indoors. But in the spring and summer months, it's time to break out of those habits — throw a frisbee in the backyard, take your dog to the local dog park, or walk instead of driving when running nearby errands.

2. Play as a family. Kids learn by example, so if you want them to get active, you need to as well. From an impromptu game of tag after

dinner to signing up for a family triathlon, the options are endless.

3. Join a local team. Summer is prime time to join a local team, as there are many summer leagues with schedules in line with school vacation. If your child lacks confidence in the classic gym class sports, look for options they haven't tried before, like beach volleyball or lacrosse.

4. Learn a new sport. If your kids aren't quite ready for the competitive sport world, start with lessons. The summer is a great time to enrol kids in swimming lessons — with outdoor pools open, kids can learn water safety, an essential life skill, in a sunny, open-air environment.

Do you have a safety story, tip or pet-peeve to share?

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