

Wilton Police Department



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2016 Distracted Driving High Visibility Enforcement Campaign

Wilton Police Department and Connecticut Highway Safety Office team up to Kick off National Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Connecticut Enforces "U Drive. U Text. U Pay." Statewide Crackdown

The Wilton Police Department is partnering with the Connecticut Highway Safety Office as part of National Distracted Driving Awareness Month to crack down on drivers who choose to ignore Connecticut's mobile phone laws.

The joint effort will span through the month of April, kicking off on April 4th and running through April 30th.

In 2014, an estimated 3,179 people were killed (10 percent of all crash fatalities) and an additional 431,000 were injured (18 percent of all crash injuries) in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers. Last year, Connecticut drivers started to get the message as a result of this crackdown, and law enforcement wrote over 22,000 citations as part of last year's effort to get drivers to put down their phones and pay attention to the road.

Connecticut's cell phone law has been in effect for over a decade now. So it is safe to say that the law is well known at this point. Connecticut has been ahead of the curve in terms of passing tough laws and enforcing them, and while this is a difficult habit to break, the impacts this behavior can have are very real and result in crashes that have potentially devastating consequences on people's lives.

DOT observations conducted before and after last year's crackdown showed a significant drop in hand held mobile phone use at selected enforcement locations. **The observations showed a decrease in distracted driving from 9.6% before April 2015, to 7.8% in August 2015.** This represents a 23 percent drop in phone use at the selected enforcement locations.

While the law regarding cell phone use by drivers is well established, we all know we still see people every day who choose to ignore the Connecticut law, and put themselves and others on

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the road at risk. The goal is that with a continual and strategic focus on cell phone enforcement, we can prevent needless crashes from happening, and people from getting injured or killed – that is what it is all about.

Fines for using a mobile phone while behind the wheel have not changed, though they are still steep. A first offense will cost \$150, a second \$300, and a third and subsequent offense \$500.

The effort will ramp up again in August from the 3rd to the 16th.

For more information about national distracted driving issues, visit www/distraction.gov.

