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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PUT YOUR PHONE AWAY!
APRIL IS DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH.

TROY, OHIO (04/4/2018) Miami County Public Health & Safe Communities Coalition want to remind community members about the dangers of distracted driving. Distracted driving has become one of the most common reasons for vehicle crashes on America's roads. That's why the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is teaming up with law enforcement agencies across the United States for the national *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.* high-visibility enforcement effort. From April 12 to 16, 2018, officers will be on high alert to catch distracted drivers and enforce distracted-driving laws.

According to NHTSA, in 2016, 3,450 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers. Nearly one-tenth of all fatal crashes in 2016 were reported as distraction-affected. Texting while driving has become an especially problematic trend among millennials. According to NHTSA, young drivers 16 to 24 years old have been observed using handheld electronic devices while driving at higher rates than older drivers since 2007.

"We can't say it enough: distracted driving is a life or death issue," said Vicky Knisley-Henry. "What people need to understand is how dangerous it is to take your eyes off the road, hands off the wheel, and concentration off the task of driving safely. It only takes a few seconds for a child to run into the street or for you to drive through a red light or stop sign and crash, potentially killing someone or yourself. That's why during April, you will see an increased police presence on the roadways, and anyone who is caught texting and driving, will pay."

"Too many drivers are ignoring their responsibilities behind the wheel," said Knisley-Henry. "Do the right thing—put your phone away when you get behind the wheel."

Save yourself the embarrassment and expense of getting pulled over on account of your cell phone—and more importantly, maybe save someone's life."

Remember these safety tips as you drive, and spread the message to your friends and family members:

- If you are expecting a text message or need to send one, pull over and park your car in a safe location. Once you are safely off the road, it is safe to text.





- Designate your passenger as your “designated texter.” Allow them access to your phone to respond to calls or messages.
 - Do not engage in social media scrolling or messaging while driving.
 - Cell phone use can be habit-forming. Struggling to not text and drive? Put the cell phone in the trunk or back seat of the vehicle until you arrive at your final destination.
- Texting while driving is dangerous, and getting caught can be expensive and embarrassing. Save face, your money, and maybe save a life—your text message can wait. Remember: U Drive. U Text. U Pay.

For more information, visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov.

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