



RALSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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U Drive. U Text. U Pay. National Traffic Mobilization

The Ralston Police Department is teaming up with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for the national *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.* high-visibility enforcement effort. From April 1-8, 2024, law enforcement officers from across the country will work together to enforce texting and distracted driving laws to make our roads safer for all road users.

According to NHTSA, nearly 32,483 people died in distraction-affected crashes over the ten-year period from 2011 to 2020. In 2020, there were 3,142 deaths linked to driver distraction, or 8% of all motor-vehicle crash fatalities. This is an increase of 23 fatalities compared to 2019.

Research shows that Millennials and Generation Z are the most distracted drivers, often using their cell phones to talk, text, and scroll through social media while behind the wheel. In 2020, 7% of drivers 15 to 20 years old involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted.

Nebraska research from 2022 showed that 1 in 10 drivers is distracted by using electronic devices.

Violating Nebraska's distracted-driving laws can be costly. The fine for using a handheld communication device in Nebraska will result in a \$200 - \$500 fine and put 3 points on your driving record that can have additional costs!

Many drivers are guilty of a "double standard" when it comes to distracted driving. In its 2018 Traffic Safety Culture Index, the AAA Foundation reported that while nearly 96% of drivers believed it was very or extremely dangerous to read a text or email while driving, 4 out of 10 drivers admitted to doing so within the previous 30 days.

The Ralston Police Department and NHTSA urge drivers to put their phones away when behind the wheel. If you need to text, pull over and do not drive while doing so. If you are the driver, follow these steps for a safe driving experience:

- 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 and parked, it is safe to text.
- Ask your passenger to be 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 is habit-forming. Struggling to not text and drive? Activate your phone's "Do Not Disturb" feature, or put your phone in the trunk, glove box, or back seat of your vehicle until you arrive at your destination.

Texting while driving is dangerous and illegal. Break the cycle. Remember: *U Drive. U Text. U Pay.* For more information, visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/distracted-driving>.