

**it's
NOT
worth
it!**



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Covina Police Department Joins Crackdown on Texting and Handheld Cell Use Behind the Wheel

(Covina, CA) – As part of April's *Distracted Driving Awareness Month* campaign, The Covina Police Department will be joining with over 200 other local law enforcement agencies and the California Highway Patrol in a month long "zero tolerance" enforcement and education campaign to curb those texting or operating hand-held cell phones while driving. Officers will be on alert throughout the month for those who break the cell phone laws and place themselves and others in danger. Special high visibility enforcement operations to cite cell phone violators will take place on April 3rd, 8th, 17th & 22nd.

The increased enforcement and education aims to persuade drivers to recognize the dangers of distracted driving and reduce the number of people impacted by this perilous behavior. The "*It's Not Worth It!*" theme emphasizes that a phone call or text isn't worth a hefty fine or a collision. The current minimum ticket cost is \$161, with subsequent tickets increasing in cost.

"We take the issue of distracted driving very seriously," said Covina Police Chief Kim Raney, "because we see the aftermath of these totally preventable crashes. Is that text message or cell phone call really worth \$161, or worse, someone's life?"

Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. In addition, studies show that texting while driving can delay a driver's reaction time just as severely as having a blood alcohol content of a legally drunk driver. According to research, sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds. Even a three second glance at freeway speeds means a driver has traveled the distance of a football field.

To avoid a distracted driving citation or related collision, the Covina Police offer drivers the following tips:

- Turn off your phone and/or put it out of reach while driving
- Include in your outgoing message that you can't answer while you are driving
- Don't call or text anyone at a time when you think they may be driving