

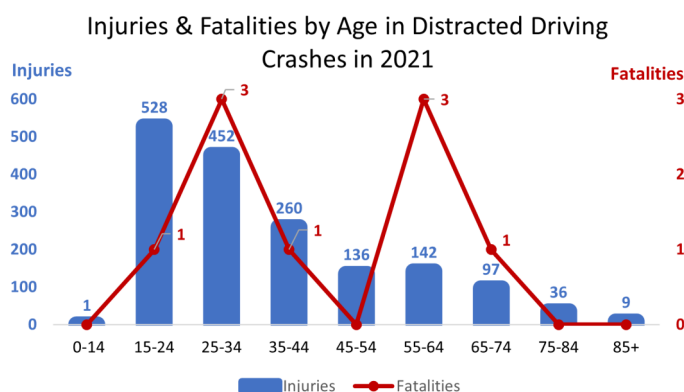
Distracted Driving Crashes in Wisconsin

Did you know...

In 2021, someone was injured or killed in a distracted driving crash every 2 hours in Wisconsin.

- 10,294 distracted driving-related crashes occurred in Wisconsin in 2021.
- In these crashes, 40 people were killed and 4,372 people were injured.
- Distracted driving contributed to 8% of all crashes and 7% of all fatal crashes.

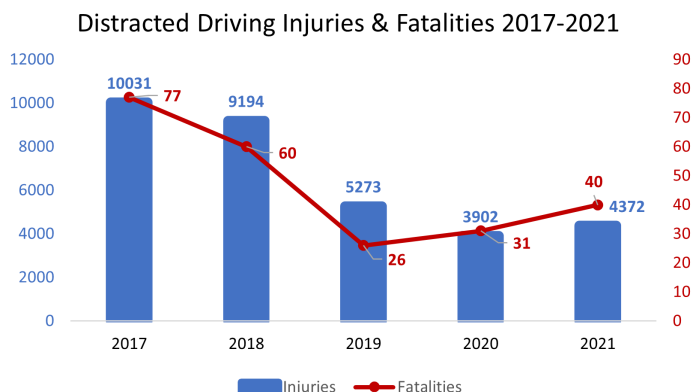
Scope of the Problem



Younger drivers (ages 15-24) are more likely to be involved in a distracted driving crash than members of any other age cohort. In 2021, younger drivers made up only 12% of all licensed drivers but accounted for 34% of all drivers in a distracted driving-related crash.

Injuries were highest among 15 to 24 year olds, who make up more than 30% of all distracted driving injuries. Fatalities were highest among drivers age 25 to 34 and 55 to 64 in 2021.

Distracted driving injuries and fatalities had been on the decline, however, fatalities in 2020 and 2021 increased after a dip in 2019. Perhaps a result of fewer road users during the pandemic, it is clear that distracted driving remains an issue seeing the increase from 2020 in distracted related injuries.



Distracted Driving Crash Risk Factors

Taking eyes off the road even briefly can lead to detrimental outcomes. The top distractions for distracted driving-related crashes are:

- Distraction by an outside person, object, or event
- Using or reaching for device/object brought into the vehicle
- Distraction by a passenger
- Lost In thought/daydreaming
- Adjusting audio or climate controls

60% of distracted driving-related crashes occurred in urban areas in 2021. Urban areas can present more obstacles for drivers. Drivers should concentrate on watching for pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles to avoid crashes.

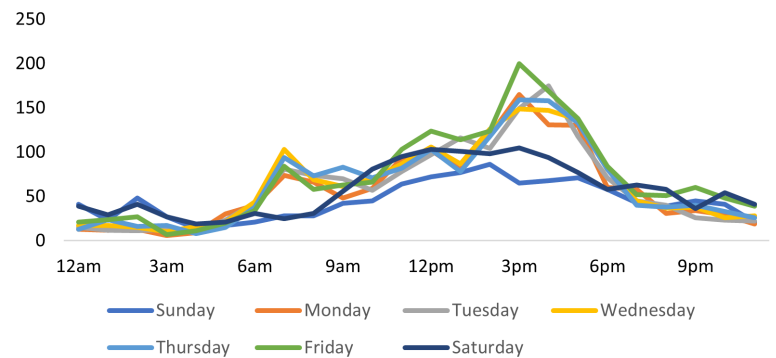
About 84% of distracted driving crashes occur in dry road conditions, followed by wet conditions with 10% of crashes in 2021. The third most common weather condition where distracted driving crashes occurred was in snow, at 3% of crashes in 2021.

When do Crashes Occur?

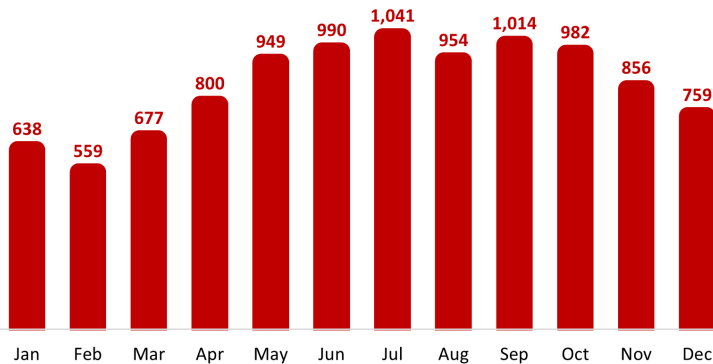
The peak times for distracted driving-related crashes occur from 7 to 8 a.m. and from 3 to 5 p.m. Over the week, these crash patterns vary. Patterns correlate with weekday peak commute times.

Friday has the highest total number of crashes with the afternoon also having the highest peak of all day of the week. Sunday has the fewest number of crashes.

Distracted Driving Crashes by Time and Day of Week in 2021



Distracted Driving Crashes by Month in 2021



The number of distracted driving-related crashes is consistent over the year. In 2021, September peaked at 33 crashes per day and February dipped to the lowest at 20 crashes per day.

The summer months are subject to the highest distracted driving crashes when compared to other seasons. This can be somewhat attributed to the young drivers being out of school, and the nice weather, resulting in higher numbers of less attentive drivers on the road.

Distracted Driving Laws

Wis. Stats. 346.89 (1), (3), (4) and (5)

- Drivers may not perform activities that interfere with the safe driving of their vehicle.
- Drivers may not text while the car is in motion.
- Drivers with a learner's permit or probationary license may not use their mobile phones while driving, except to report emergencies.
- Drivers may not operate or be in a position to directly observe any electronic device located within the vehicle that is activated and that is providing entertainment primarily by visual means.

What Can You Do?

- Just drive—don't try to multitask behind the wheel.
- Keep both hands on the wheel and eyes on the road.
- Be alert to your surroundings and traffic conditions.
- Don't drive while tired.
- Use caution and reduce travel speed in unfavorable weather and road conditions.
- Be alert when traveling in work zones, school zones and railway grade crossings.
- Obey speed limits and wear a safety belt to reduce the risk of being injured or killed.