

During the month of April, traffic officers from the Newberg-Dundee Police Department focused their enforcement on the three intersections in the community with the most reported traffic crashes from March 2012-March 2013. Those intersections were: Portland Rd. at N Springbrook Rd. (13 crashes) and Portland Rd. at N Elliott Rd. (8 crashes) in Newberg and Hwy 99W at 5th St. in Dundee (12 crashes).

The goal of the focused enforcement was not only to encourage drivers to obey traffic laws, but also to minimize “distracted driving”. Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), distracted drivers are 23 times more likely to be involved in a traffic crash.

There are three types of driving distractions:

Manual: Taking your hands off the wheel

Visual: Taking your eyes off the road

Cognitive: Taking your mind off driving

All distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety. These types of distractions include:

- Texting
- Using a cell phone or smartphone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Having a dog in your lap
- Using a navigation system
- Watching a video
- Adjusting a radio, CD player, or MP3 player

According to NHTSA, text messaging while driving is the most alarming because it is a manual, visual, and cognitive distraction. Sending or receiving a text message requires the driver to take their eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds. At 35mph, that’s driving blind for 236 feet!

Nationwide in 2012, there were over 3,000 traffic fatalities and over 400,000 injuries attributed to distracted driving crashes. The financial costs of distracted driving crashes were over \$400 billion in 2012.

The Newberg-Dundee Police Department asks that everyone do their part to keep themselves and others safe on the roads.

Turn off your phone.

Plan your routes in advance.

Focus on driving.

Sources: NHTSA and US Department of Transportation