

For Immediate Release



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East Hartford Police Reminds Residents to SUBTRACT THE DISTRACTION

Next Wave of "U Drive. U Text. U Pay" to Launch August 1 – August 15

The East Hartford Police Department, along with the Connecticut Department of Transportation's Highway Safety Office, has announced today the continuation of the "U DRIVE. U TEXT. U PAY" campaign. Through this initiative, officers will be cracking down on motorists who text, talk, or distract themselves with a hand-held mobile phone while driving.

"Texting and driving is a public safety crisis. Our mission is to save lives and protect the public. Enforcing texting and driving laws is a critical priority for our department," said East Hartford Police Chief Scott Sansom. "Starting August 1st, the community will see an increased and highly visible law enforcement presence on our roadways with a focus on safety. Our Officers will be stopping and ticketing anyone who is endangering the public due to texting and driving. If you text and drive, you will be pulled-over."

During the first wave of this campaign, in April 2018, more than 10,000 citations were issued to motorists who chose to ignore Connecticut's distracted driving laws. While this is a start, there is still more work to be done.

The second run of this two-part campaign will go from August 1st to August 15th. Throughout the campaign, East Hartford Police will mobilize by adding special patrols aimed at catching distracted drivers – especially those on their phones. Over 50 law enforcement agencies, including both state and local police, who were previously involved in the April 2018 campaign, will again be participating.

The special patrols that will be running during this campaign are funded by Connecticut's special distracted driving prevention funds. Connecticut qualifies for this federal funding source through a mix of tough laws and a proven track record

in strong enforcement of distracted driving laws. Over \$9.1 million has been awarded to the state over the last three years specifically to fund campaigns like this one.

Under Connecticut's cell phone and texting law, violations involve heavy fines, ranging from \$150 for a first offense, \$300 for a second violation, and \$500 for each subsequent violation.

In 2016, there were 3,450 distracted driving related deaths and in 2015 an estimated 391,000 were injured in distracted driving motor vehicle crashes nationally.

For more information about national distracted driving issues, visit www.distracted.gov.