

# Motor vehicles accidents in california research paper

[Environment](#), [Disaster](#)



## **Introduction**

Motor vehicle accidents, this is the situation that occurs when two or more cars collide, when a pedestrian, tree or animal is hit. In these accidents, the results could be injuries, damages in the cars, trauma, lawsuits or death. There are different causes of accidents such as drivers using cell phones, drunk driving, the state of the roads, the drivers' state of sanity, and the design of the roads. The research should show whether the accidents level has decreased since the ban of usage of phones while driving. The state of California banned the usage of cell phones in 2008. There should be statistics that will indicate whether the accident levels in California has increased or decreased.

## **California bans on usage of cell phones while driving**

The legislation banned the use of cell phones after the government research indicated that numerous accidents were attributed to the cell phone usage while driving (Mitchell, 2013). The ban was instituted in 2008 and has had a major effect because it has been observed that accident levels have reduced tremendously. Police officers were given orders to fine anyone who was using cell phones while they were driving from the 1st of January 2009 (Mitchell, 2013). According to the California, Office of the Traffic Safety (OTS) the number of people who were given tickets had reduced from 2009, which were 425, 041 to 210, 000 in 2010 (Mitchell, 2013).

Assembly Bill 313 that was filed by Jim Frazier has enabled people to use the hands free devices to communicate with others. The Commuter Freedom Bill that was approved by the Governor added this in 2012 (Copeland, 2010).

Senator Cathleen Galgiani proposed that wireless cell phone use should also be banned for teenagers. This was approved and went into effect in April of 2012. The current law states that all people above 18 years old are allowed to use wireless phones. Texting while driving was prohibited for both the teenagers and adults. The punishment for cell phone use for people caught texting while driving is a fine of \$20 for all first time offenders and \$50 for second time offenders (Mitchell, 2013).

According to research, the ban on cell phones use while driving has led to the reduction of the number of accidents tremendously (Copeland, 2010). The percentages of deaths due to accidents have declined by 22 percent. The overall percentage of deaths caused by accidents when the driver is driving has declined to 47 percent. According to the California, (OTS) Office of Traffic Safety the reduction of deaths due to accidents occurred because of the ban on the usage of cell phones when people are driving (Copeland, 2010). When the drivers are questioned about using legalized hands free devices, they opt to not use them because of the restrictions on the usage of cell phones.

In 2008, the convictions of drivers caught using cell phones declined over the years because people fear being caught and arrested or fined. This research was conducted by the Department of Motor Vehicles. Sen. Joe Simitian was the one who introduced the cell phone ban was impressed by the findings of the researcher but wanted more numbers of deaths to reduce thus he is encouraging for people using cell phones while driving when caught they should be heavily fined. This punishment will cause anyone using cell phones

while driving to think twice therefore, the number of accidents will reduce more and many lives will be saved.

## **Factors that cause motor vehicle accidents**

According to the research that has been conducted over the years, it has observed that most deaths in the United States are commonly caused by motor vehicle accidents. Human error is one of the major causes of accidents in the world. In California, it is reported to have over 400, 000 accidents yearly. About 60 percent of the accidents will cause damage to the people's properties while 39 percent will cause injuries to the people involved in the accident. 1 percent will definitely end with the death of one individual or several. The research also shows that a person is killed in California in every two hours or is injured every two minutes after an accident has occurred (Walter, 2007). In the United States, the appropriate age for people to start driving is 16 years. The number of accidents usually happens to people less than 30 years who comprise 23 percent of drivers who are licensed. The teenagers are the ones who have been involved in most car accidents compared to the adults. This therefore, means that most deaths of teenagers are mostly caused by motor vehicle accidents in California.

## **Poor vision and hearing while driving**

The driver should have good vision and hearing before taking the task of driving. Good visual simply means that the driver should have good peripheral vision, depth perception, and visual acuity. This also means that the driver should not hang things that will cause them not see the rear view mirror or will block their vision. When the driver has vision problems they are

therefore, required to have their eyes checked and start wearing glasses or have prescriptions. One should have a good hearing because it will enable the driver to know of any upcoming cars before an accident can happen. This means that the hearing of a driver is an important aspect that could avoid any accidents (Thew, 2006). In the case where the individual has problems with their hearing should seek medical attention.

## **Illness**

When the driver is not feeling well will definitely, also cause accidents because they are not concentrating on the driving. There are some medications that people use that will cause the individual to be drowsy and sleepy therefore, the driver could end up falling asleep and cause accidents. This means that whenever a driver is not feeling well they should refrain from driving thus accidents will not happen. One percent of accidents that lead to death is caused by drivers sleeping due to medication, illness or simply fatigue in the United States especially California (Thew, 2006).

## **Driving at night**

When people drive at night, they are more likely to have accidents because people are not able to see where they are driving towards especially when there are no streetlights. This means that when one is driving they should put all their concentration on the road so that they do not cause any accident. It is predicted that over 40 percent of accidents happens at night (Copeland, 2010). During the night when a person is driving, they may enter a lane that has bright lights or a car passes that has bright light will make it difficult for the drivers' to adjust from an area that is brightly lit to an area

that is dark. It is also prone to have accidents at night because most people are usually driving under influence such as drugs or alcohol.

### **Alcohol and drugs**

The use of drugs or alcohol will affect the driver's judgement and may be an additional contributing factor in accidents. The percentage of accidents of people due to alcohol consumption and drug use is 9 percent (Eby & Kostyniuk 2003). The common occurrence when one is drunk or high is that the driver will tend to drive faster and they will make poor decisions especially around the corners. When they are overtaking, other cars, they will use poor judgement and thus can have a head on collision and the driver will not be to make emergency brakes (Eby & Kostyniuk 2003).

### **Over speeding while driving**

Speeding vehicles cause 28 percent of accidents that leads to deaths or injuries. When one drives faster, they are prone to have a major impact when accidents occur because they are going fast, thus they are unable to stop the vehicle in time and they are unable to react fast because of the speed. When an accident occurs then more people are prone to injuries or deaths. According to the California rules about speed it depends on certain factors such as traffic conditions, weather, the surface width of the highway and the visibility of the drive (Hamilton, 2005). There are also speed limits that are supposed to be followed by all drivers. This means that the driver should drive lesser than the speed limit but also the driver should not drive slower because it could also bring about accidents. The ways in which one

can reduce accidents when over speeding is simply reducing speeding and follows the limits in any area that it is posted.

## **Distractions while driving**

Many things such as cell phones use usually distract drivers. This is one of the major causes of road accidents. According to research, every accident that occurs at least one or two out of all accidents is due to cell phone use. The driver will concentrate on what is happening with their phones or messages they receive which could contain bad news that will cause the driver not to concentrate on anything they are doing therefore, could cause accidents. According to statistics cell phone, use especially when one is texting increases 23 times risks of causing accidents (Steitzer, 2010). Due to the high percentage of cell phone use accidents the government enacted a ban in which it stated that no one who is driving should use the hand held cell phones

## **The drivers disregarding the traffic signs**

There are the traffic signs that are used to control the way people are driving and are useful when it comes to saving lives due to the lack of accidents. The accident rate due to lack of respecting signs is 9 percent in the California state. When people disregard or ignore these signs then they are likely to cause major accidents that could lead to fatalities. The sign also helps the drivers know which side of the road they are in and whether the signs tell the individual not to enter an area. When drivers take the wrong lane then they are prone to getting into accidents at a rate of 4 percent in California (Eby & Kostyniuk 2003). When the drivers are changing lanes then they are required

to check the lane they want to enter by checking the side mirrors, signs and also they must take a look by turning their heads and looking ahead on the lane.

## **Weather**

The weather is also a factor that causes motor vehicle accidents. This is because when it is raining season the roads tend to be slippery therefore, a combination of both speeding and slippery roads will create a catastrophic result. The best ways to avoid accidents when the weather is not good is simply watching the news, listening to whether one should leave the houses and if driving one should be very careful on slippery roads or in winters.

## **Conclusion**

California's ban on using cell phones has helped reduce fatal accidents. This is because according to the researches that were conducted one of the major causes of accidents was the usage of cell phones, especially when one is texting. Research also shows that teenagers are the ones who get involved in car accidents more often because of distraction like cell phones and friends. There are other factors that cause motor vehicle accidents like alcohol and drug use, the weather conditions, the state of the road, the type of car, speeding, lack of checking the traffic lights and when drivers use the wrong lane. These factors can easily be avoided for example following signs, driving on the right limits set by the department of traffic, and not doing any drinking or using drugs when one wants to drive. The government should set more rules and fines for people who violate the traffic rules so that accidents can be reduced.



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