



NEWS > OPERATION SAFE ROADS



Study: Texting while walking increases chance for accidents



There has been a sharp rise in the number of distracted pedestrians.



By: Megan Thompson

Posted at 5:00 AM, Feb 12, 2020 and last updated 4:31 AM, Feb 19, 2020

PHOENIX — We all know about the dangers out driving distracted. ARIZONA even put a law on the books last year to try and stop this behavior behind the wheel. But according to a new study, cell phones could be a deadly distraction for those outside cars too.

Phoenix is a place where crossing the street has a higher likelihood of costing your life.

"We talked about Phoenix being on some dubious lists," said Marc Lamber, an attorney with Fennemore Craig.

He specializes in injury law and he keeps tabs on those lists and the statistics we have been seeing.

The city of Phoenix has been trying to take action after a 200 percent increase in pedestrian deaths in the last decade.

There also has been a push statewide to limit distractions behind the wheel with a distracted driving ban now in place in Arizona.



But, now a new study may be pushing new legislation for distracted pedestrians.

"You're looking at a cell phone, you may not even appreciate that you're approaching a crosswalk," explained Lamber.

The University of Calgary found that if you are texting or surfing the web while you walk, you are more likely to cause an accident. That is compared to those taking a call or listening to music.

"Your attention is directed, when your texting, at a screen where your head is tilted down and the one place you're not looking is in front of you," Lamber described.

Lamer said there is legislation in the works to cite pedestrians for texting and walking across the nation, like in New York.

Honolulu and a city in California have already passed similar laws.

ABC15 asked Lamber: what about Arizona?

"I do see gradually more and more cities enacting laws that in some way limit the use of cell phones and electronic devices relative to pedestrians, certainly in unsafe areas like a crosswalk," Lamber said.

In his opinion, he expects the movement to happen more on a national level after more research is turned toward the pedestrian's direction.

"They're trying to get a lot more data to determine, will this have an impact on reducing pedestrian related accidents and pedestrian related fatalities," Lamber said.

Have a road issue or question for Operation Safe Roads? You can call 833-AZROADS or email roads@abc15.com.

Copyright 2020 Scripps Media, Inc. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

Report a typo

Sign up for the **Headlines Newsletter** and receive up to date information.

By: 11/20/20

Subscribe

