

# OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF SARPY COUNTY

*"Honored to Serve"*



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Sarp County Sheriff

*For Immediate Release*  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### *THE SARPY COUNTY SHERIFF AND NHTSA REMIND DRIVERS: U DRIVE. U TEXT. U PAY.*

**Papillion, NE** - The Sarp County Sheriff's Office will join law enforcement agencies nationwide April 8-12, 2021, to remind drivers about the dangers and consequences of texting and distracted driving. This annual campaign is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) national U Drive. U Text. U Pay. high-visibility enforcement effort.

In 2019, there were 4,566 drivers involved in distracted driving crashes in Nebraska. There were also 248 fatalities from motor-vehicle crashes in Nebraska in 2019. Of those 248 fatalities, 178 took place in urban areas and 70 took place in rural areas of the state. It is important to stress to drivers the dangers of driving distracted as the number of fatalities from motor vehicle crashes in Nebraska has increased every year since 2016. Of the 248 fatalities, 11 were due to distracted driving.

Millennials and Gen Z are the most distracted drivers, often using their cell phones to talk, text, and scroll through social media while behind the wheel. According to NHTSA research from 2017, young drivers 16 to 24 years old have been observed using handheld electronic devices while driving at higher rates than older drivers since 2007. In 2019, 9% of people killed in teen (15-19) driving crashes died when the teen drivers were distracted at the time of the crash.

In 2019, Nebraska drivers ages 15- 24 were involved in 17.9% of the 248 fatal crashes.

"We aren't out here for the fun of it," said Sarp County Chief Deputy Sheriff Greg London. "Texting, messaging, and other forms of distracted driving are increasing habits that put everyone at risk, even those of us in law enforcement. We want drivers to focus on the most important task: hands on the wheel and eyes on the road."

Many drivers are guilty of a "double standard" when it comes to distracted driving. In its 2018 Traffic Safety Culture Index, the AAA Foundation reported that while nearly 96% of drivers believed it was very or extremely dangerous to read a text or email while driving, 4 out of 10 drivers admitted to doing so within the previous 30 days.

Texting while driving is dangerous and illegal. No text or post is worth ruining someone's day — or taking a life. Remember: U Drive. U Text. U Pay.

The Sarp County Sheriff's Office is one of the largest Sheriff's Offices in Nebraska, serving the fastest growing county in the state. Its team of dedicated law enforcement officers and civilian staff are ***honored to serve*** its citizens and community.

If you have any questions, contact Sgt. Kyle Percifield at 402-593-1548 or email [kpercifield@sarpy.com](mailto:kpercifield@sarpy.com).

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