

The Hazards of Using Mobile Devices While Walking on Campus

Acknowledgements: www.compliance.gov

There are many concerns about the risk associated with pedestrian distractions associated with cellphones and mobile devices. There is a captivation with responding to or sending text messages, talking on cell phones or using other forms of mobile devices and headphones in our world today. Preoccupied and distracted pedestrians have become common on busy city streets and campuses. This loss of situational awareness is similar to that of a distracted driver. The result can be that of injury or death.



A study conducted at Western Washington University noted that talking on a cell phone takes a toll on cognition and awareness. It showed that pedestrians using their cell phones often did not notice objects or people in their path. Also found was a type of preoccupation called “inattention blindness” meaning that a person can be looking at an object but fail to register it or process what it is.

Another study at University of Birmingham found:

- Students using cell phones took up to 20% longer to cross the street than those not using a phone.
- Slow-crossing students with cell phones were up to 43% more likely to be hit by a vehicle while crossing the street.
- Students looked both ways 20% fewer times when crossing the street while using a cell phone.

Hazards of using mobile devices while walking:

- Cell Phones: Inattention to surroundings or lack of situational awareness
- Texting while walking: Eyes taken away from the path of travel and inattention to surroundings
- MP3 players with headphones: Noise-induced hearing loss and inattention to surroundings

How to prevent accidents from distracted walking?

- Don't walk, talk and text.
- If you have to talk or text, stop and move to the side of the walkway out of the way of others.
- Never cross or walk in the street while using an electronic device.
- Don't walk with headphones in your ears.
- Keep track of your surroundings at all times.



HAWK (High-Intensity Activated Cross Walk)

What is this? Find out here:

https://youtu.be/zz7RzMB9y_E