



New York Car Accident Attorney Says Web Surfing While Driving Is Cruising For Trouble

Steven J. Schwartzapfel, a founding lawyer of the New York personal injury law firm of Schwartzapfel Partners, says a State Farm survey finding that nearly one in five drivers surf the Internet while behind the wheel indicates a need to increase awareness about the dangers of distracted driving.

New York, NY (Vocus/PRWEB) March 10, 2011 -- [New York lawyer](#) Steven J. Schwartzapfel has called attention to a new law which makes hand-held cell phone use a two-point moving violation on NY drivers' licenses.

Beginning in February, New York drivers who are pulled over for texting or talking on their cell phones will face two points on their driver's license. NY's tougher stance on cell phone use while driving comes at a time when a new survey shows just how widespread that dangerous practice is.

As reported last week in [USA Today](#), nearly 20 percent of drivers in a State Farm survey said they used the Internet with their cell phone while behind the wheel. An even higher percentage said they talked or texted on their phones while driving, the newspaper reported.

"It's a national tragedy that almost 5,500 people were killed in auto accidents in 2009 and nearly half a million people were seriously injured as a result of distracted driving, a term which includes texting, surfing and cell phone use," said Schwartzapfel.

Schwartzapfel is a founding partner of the New York injury law firm of Schwartzapfel Partners, which represents consumers seriously injured or killed in [car accidents](#) throughout New York City's five boroughs of Manhattan, the Bronx, Staten Island, Queens and Brooklyn, as well as Long Island and surrounding areas.

"The number of fatalities is mind-boggling," Schwartzapfel said. "It's the equivalent of a jumbo jet crashing every month."

"The sad fact is that the State Farm survey barely scratches the surface when it comes to the number of people using electronic devices, such as smartphones and cell phones, when they're driving," said Schwartzapfel.

Recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics illustrate the dangers of cell phone use and texting while driving, Schwartzapfel said, pointing to a 2009 NHTSA study finding that 5,474 people were killed and nearly 448,000 injured in distracted driving crashes in 2009. About 18 percent of those car accidents involved cell phone use.

"New York State has been a national leader in passing laws that are aimed at stopping [hand-held cell phone use at the wheel](#), but as the State Farm survey shows, we need to do a better job of promoting awareness of these laws and of the very real dangers of using electronic devices such as smartphones while driving," Schwartzapfel said.

"People need to realize that text messaging and surfing while driving kills," he said.



According to USA Today, the online State Farm survey involved 912 licensed drivers. Roughly 19 percent said they used their cell phone to access the Internet at least once a week, while 74 percent said they made or received phone calls and 35 percent reporting sending or receiving text messages.

As reported in the [New York Times](#), a 2009 study by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute found that the risk of collision is 23 times greater when a driver texts behind the wheel than when not texting.

“It’s difficult to imagine anything more distracting than talking or texting on a cell phone or using the phone to surf the Internet while you’re driving down the road at highway speed,” Schwartzapfel said. “Our law firm has represented numerous New York car accident victims and their families in personal injury and wrongful death lawsuits, and we’ve seen up close the terrible consequences of hand-held cell phone use while driving.”

In 2001, New York became one of the first states in the country to ban the use of hand-held cell phones while driving, and in 2009 the state enacted a texting ban. In February, a tougher law took effect. Drivers who are pulled over for texting or talking on their cell phones will be hit with two points on their driver's license.

“These laws are tremendous steps forward, but we have to make sure people are getting the message that this conduct is against the law, and we need to make sure we are enforcing the laws,” Schwartzapfel said. “In the meantime, our firm will continue to protect the rights of New York accident victims injured by distracted drivers.”

About Schwartzapfel Partners P.C.

Schwartzapfel Partners P.C. is a prominent and well- respected [New York personal injury law firm](#) with area offices in Manhattan, the Bronx, White Plains, Jericho and Garden City. With more than 150 years of combined experience and highly competent co-counsel throughout the country, Schwartzapfel Partners serves all of their clients’ legal needs. The firm focuses on all types of personal injury litigation, including vehicle accidents (car, truck motorcycle, bicycle and pedestrian), medical malpractice, wrongful death, defective products and drugs, construction accidents, workplace accidents, workers’ compensation, Social Security disability, nursing home neglect and abuse, and complex highway design defect cases. To contact the law firm, call (800) 966-4999 or use the firm’s [online contact form](#).

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