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Erie Insurance distracted driving survey finds drivers doing all sorts of dangerous things behind the wheel--from PDA to taking selfies to changing clothes

Survey also finds texting while driving varies by gender, region, age

ERIE, Pa., March 25, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Pop quiz: What percentage of drivers have brushed or flossed their teeth behind the wheel? While it's crazy to think that anyone would floss their teeth while cruising down the highway, it's just one distraction that people admitted to in a new survey from [Erie Insurance](#). To discourage [distracted driving](#) in conjunction with National Distracted Driving Awareness Month in April, Erie Insurance asked drivers what they do behind the wheel. Highlights of the results are shown in this [infographic](#); additional results are available upon request. The online survey of 1,915 U.S. drivers aged 18 and older was conducted in February by Harris Poll on behalf of Erie Insurance.



"A distraction is anything that causes a driver to take their eyes off the road, their hands off the wheel, or their mind off their primary task of driving safely," said Doug Smith, senior vice president of personal lines at Erie Insurance. "Our survey found drivers unfortunately are engaging in a wide range of distracting and potentially dangerous behaviors."

Besides the obvious phone distractions of texting and talking, other distractions people admitted to ranged from public displays of affection to personal grooming to taking selfies.

Distracted driving behavior and percentage of drivers who engaged in it

- Romantic encounter/PDA	15%
- Combing/styling hair	15%
- Changing clothes	9%
- Putting on make-up	8%
- Brushing/flossing teeth	4%
- Taking selfies	4%
- Changing drivers	3%
- Going to the bathroom	3%

Other reported distractions included putting in contact lenses or eye drops; curling eyelashes; scratching off lottery tickets; and even playing the guitar while driving.

The survey found that texting while driving also remains a serious problem, with about one-third of drivers (30 percent) saying they themselves have done it and three-quarters (75 percent) saying they've seen others do it.

The survey revealed regional and other differences about who texts while driving.

Texting by region

Drivers in the Northeast text the least.

- Northeast	24%
- Midwest	28%
- West	30%
- South	35%

Texting by gender

Men are more likely to text than women.

- Men 32%
- Women 28%

Texting by age

Younger drivers text more.

- 18-34 51%
- 35-44 39%
- 45-54 33%
- 55-64 14%
- 65 and older 7%

According to U.S. government [statistics](#), in 2012, more than 420,000 people were injured in car crashes involving distracted driving and more than 3,300 people were killed. In 2013, Erie Insurance analyzed police data and found that [daydreaming was the most fatal distracted driving behavior](#) behind the wheel.

"As a car insurance company who cares deeply about our customers, we want to do whatever we can to help people stay safe behind the wheel," said Smith. "We hope that our survey will get people talking about the importance of eliminating distracted driving and keeping their focus on the road."

About the survey

The survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll on behalf of Erie Insurance from Feb 23-25, 2015 among 2,019 adults ages 18 and older. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables, please contact Leah Knapp at leah.knapp@eriesinsurance.com.

About Erie Insurance

According to A.M. Best Company, Erie Insurance Group, based in Erie, Pennsylvania, is the 11th largest homeowners insurer and 12th largest automobile insurer in the United States based on direct premiums written and the 16th largest property/casualty insurer in the United States based on total lines net premium written. The Group, rated A+ (Superior) by A.M. Best Company, has more than 5 million policies in force and operates in 12 states and the District of Columbia. Erie Insurance Group is a FORTUNE 500 and Barron's 500 company. Erie Insurance is proud to have received the J.D. Power award for "[Highest in Customer Satisfaction with the Auto Insurance Purchase Experience](#)" two years in a row. ERIE has also been recognized by Forbes as one of America's 50 Most Trustworthy Financial Companies and is on the list of Ward's 50 Group of top performing insurance companies, which analyzes the financial performance of 3,000 property and casualty companies and recognizes the top performers for achieving outstanding results in safety, consistency and financial performance over a five-year period (2009-2013).

News releases and more information about Erie Insurance Group are available at www.erieinsurance.com.

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