

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Chief Blake Wells

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Idaho Agencies Connect to Disconnect

MONTPELIER, IDAHO — Montpelier Police Department is joining with law enforcement agencies across the country to get distracted drivers off the road. This is part of a nationwide effort called Connect to Disconnect.

Starting, Monday April 19 through April 30, our officers will be on the roads enforcing Idaho's new hands-free driving law. They will be joined by officers across the country who will also be enforcing distracted driving laws.

"April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month and we are going to do everything we can to educate the public and keep our community safe," said **Chief Blake Wells**.

According to data the Idaho Transportation Department, between 2015 and 2019 there were 25,170 distracted driving crashes in Idaho killing 237 people. Nationally, distracted driving was a factor in nine percent of all traffic fatalities in 2019 – in Idaho, it was 16 percent.

To help improve safety on our roads, the Idaho legislature passed a law last year banning the use of handheld electronic devices while driving – even while temporarily stopped at a traffic signal or stop sign. Officers spent the second half 2020 educating drivers about the new law and in January they began issuing citations.

"Inattentive driving is an illegal and dangerous behavior and it has no place on our roads," said Chief Blake Wells. "Our officers are out doing their part to end distracted driving involved crashes, we hope the public does their part too by choosing to put away distractions and to drive engaged."