



NEWS RELEASE

OCEAN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND



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For Immediate Release:

MARYLAND NO CELL PHONE WHILE DRIVING LAW TAKES EFFECT OCTOBER 1, 2010

The Ocean City Police Department is reminding citizens who operate a motor vehicle, Maryland Senate Bill 321 and House Bill 934 were signed into law by Governor O'Malley and take effect October 1, 2010.

The new law prohibits all drivers in Maryland from using hand-held cell phones while operating a motor vehicle on a street or highway. **Drivers under 18 already are prohibited from using cell phones while driving.**

There are certain exceptions. Phone calls placed to 9-1-1, ambulance, hospital, fire, or law enforcement agencies are allowed, as are calls made by emergency and law enforcement personnel. A driver is allowed to turn a hand-held phone on or off and to initiate or terminate a call.

The fine for a first offense is \$40 and subsequent offenses are \$100. Points are not assessed to the first-time violator's driving record, except, three points are assessed if the violation contributes to a crash. If a violator has a second or subsequent offense, he or she receives a point plus the fine. This law does not apply to texting 9-1-1 or using a global positioning system.

Studies indicate that mobile phone conversations distract drivers and delay reaction time, which can cause and increase the severity of vehicular crashes. The National Safety Council estimates that cell phone use is responsible for 1.6 million crashes a year, nationally -- about 28 percent of all crashes. Maryland now joins seven other states (Calif., Conn., Del., N.J., N.Y., Ore. and Wash.), Washington D.C. and the Virgin Islands in banning hand-held cell phone use while driving. For more information, please visit www.ChooseSafetyForLife.com



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Quite often, citizens' hunches turn out to be valuable information to us. If you have information that you feel we should know, we encourage you to leave us e-mail. OCPD@oceancitymd.gov
For additional public safety information, go to the Official OCPD Blog at: <http://ocpdmdinfo.blogspot.com> or view real-time public safety advisories on "Twitter" by searching OCPDMDInfo.