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Texting While Driving Ban

Nine out of 10 people interviewed on the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville campus Wednesday said that texting while driving is unsafe and should be outlawed.

“It’s dangerous—obviously. I’ve seen the results of people not paying attention while texting,” said Michael Graham, a sophomore studying mechanical engineering at SIUE. “This lady ran a red light while texting and had to slam on her brakes to avoid an accident.”

Texting or text messaging involves sending or receiving quick typed messages via cell phones. This typically requires the use of both hands and your eyes to focus on the cell phone to read what is typed.

Two respondents recalled a time when they felt their lives were in danger because the driver was preoccupied while texting and not paying attention to the road. “Texting is very disruptive while driving---people aren’t focused,” said Alex Kaufman, a freshman in pre-pharmacy. “I’ve seen friends texting and driving and I don’t like to be a part of that.”

The exact question posed was: “Do you think that there should be a law to prohibit texting while driving?”

Jeremy Muth, an SIUE MBA graduate, said, “Talking on the phone should be banned too, but texting is more involved than talking on the phone.” He also said that he has seen drivers not paying attention and just texting away with their hands off the wheel. He made a two-handed gesture of texting to demonstrate what he had witnessed.

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Erin Bremer, an undeclared freshman, did not agree with a ban on texting while driving because she does it all the time and did not want to be hypocritical. Two respondents that were for a ban admitted they continue to text while driving even though they have almost wrecked before. The rest of the respondents really frowned upon texting while driving.

Bonnie Farrington, who is the office support associate for SIUE student government, said “unequivocally---yes” to a ban on texting. “It interferes with concentration and a persons’ ability to function as a driver.” Although adamant about a ban, she said it would be very hard to enforce.

Kayla Smith, a senior in business administration, said that texting while driving is extremely hazardous. “Even if it’s something important—it can wait,” she said. “There have been so many things in the media about accidents being caused by texting while driving.”

Trent Harvey, a freshman studying business administration, strongly agreed with a law that prohibits texting while driving. “A friend of mine got killed when he stepped out in front of a driver that was texting,” he said.

According to the Illinoishomepage.net, Sen. Dan Rutherford (R-Potomac) has proposed a bill to access fines to drivers caught texting. If caught, the driver may be issued a “Texting While Driving” ticket of \$75. A steeper fine of \$200 would be imposed if an accident is caused by texting. The idea for a bill came about when the senator witnessed a women text while driving with her kids in the car with her.

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