

Health Indicator Report

Use of Mobile Devices While Driving

Background

The purpose of this health indicator report is to provide information on the use of mobile devices while driving by Halton adults aged 18 and over.

The use of a mobile device, such as a cell phone, while driving is considered distracted driving.¹ In Ontario, the number of deaths from distracted driving collisions has doubled since 2000.¹ It is estimated that a distracted driver using a cell phone is four times more likely to crash compared to a focused driver, and two people are injured from a distracted driving collision in Ontario every hour.¹ Suggestions to reduce distracting driving include the use of a hands-free device or to pull over to an appropriate and safe area.¹

The Ontario government first introduced legislation prohibiting the use of mobile devices when driving on October 26, 2009, through Bill 118: the Countering Distracted Driving and Promoting Green Transportation Act.² The Bill states that drivers must either refrain from using these devices while driving or use hands-free mode.² Effective September 1, 2015, the Ontario government introduced greater penalties to discourage drivers from using a device while driving.³ These measures include increased fines, higher demerit points and licence suspensions.³

This Health Indicator Report uses data from the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS).

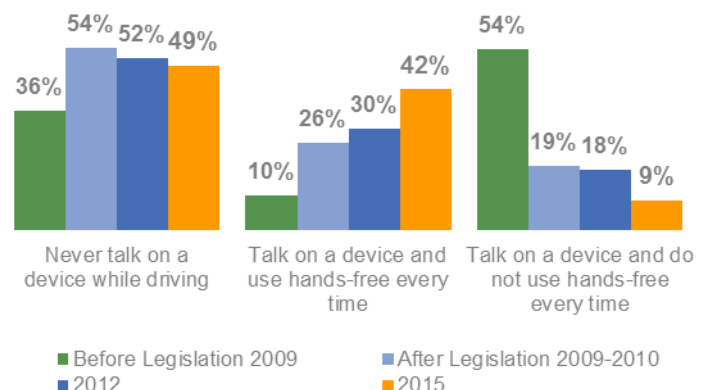
Talking on a Hand-Held Wireless Device While Driving

Trends Over Time

From 2009 to 2015 the percentage of adults in Halton who reported never talking on a mobile device while driving increased from 36% to 49% and this increase was **statistically significant**.

From 2009 to 2015 the percentage of adults in Halton who reported talking on a mobile device but always using hands-free while driving increased from 10% to 42% and this increase was **statistically significant**.

From 2009 to 2015 the percentage of adults in Halton who reported talking on a mobile device and not always using hands-free while driving decreased from 54% to 9% and this decrease was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported their usage of mobile devices while driving, Halton Region, 2009-2015

Sex

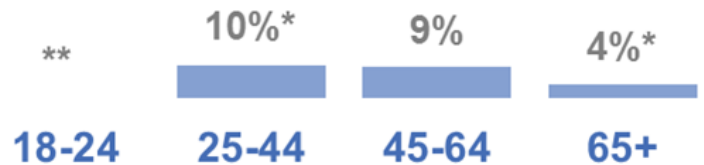
In 2015, there were no statistically significant differences by sex in the percentage of Halton adults who reported ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving, by sex, Halton Region, 2015

Age

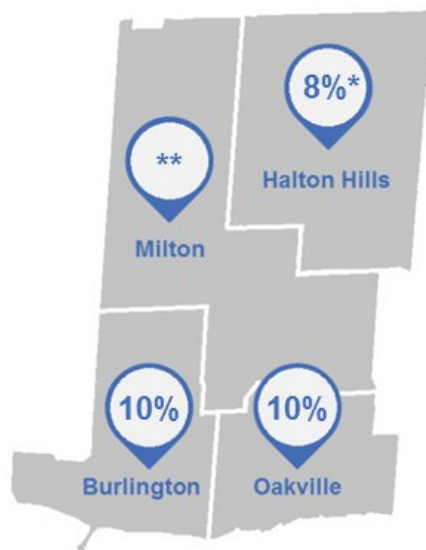
In 2015, Halton adults aged 65+ were less likely than all other age groups to report ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving. This difference was **statistically significant** when comparing adults aged 65+ to adults aged 45-64.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving, by age, Halton Region, 2015

Municipality

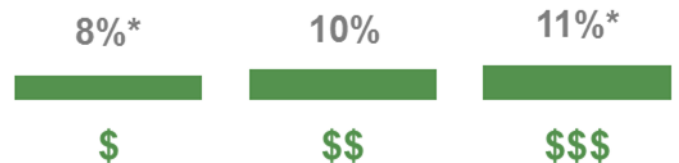
In 2015, there were no statistically significant differences by municipality in the percentage of Halton adults who reported ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving, by municipality, Halton Region, 2015

Income

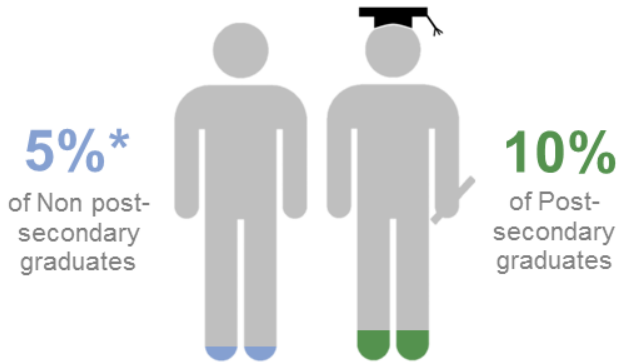
In 2015, there were no statistically significant differences by income in the percentage of Halton adults who reported ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving, by income, Halton Region, 2015

Education

In 2015, there were no statistically significant differences by education in the percentage of Halton adults who reported ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving.

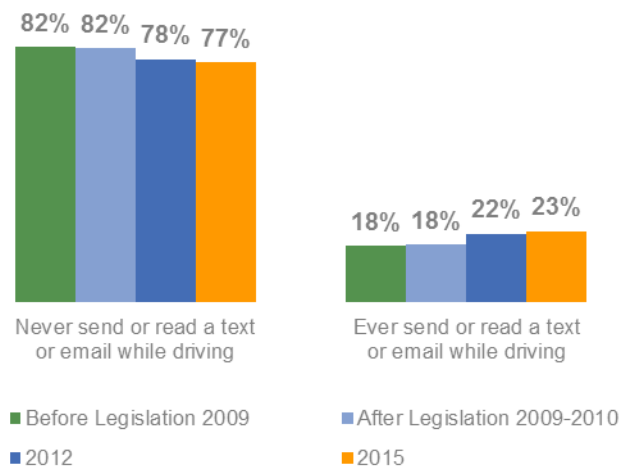


Percentage of adults aged 25 and over who reported ever talking on a mobile device and not using hands-free while driving, by education, Halton Region, 2015

Sending or Reading a Text Message or Email While Driving

In 2015, 77% of Halton adults reported never sending or reading a text message or email while driving. There were no statistically significant changes from 2009 to 2015.

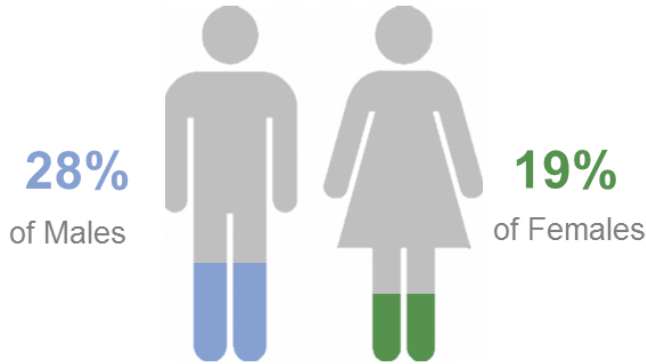
In 2015, 23% of Halton adults reported sending or reading a text message or email while driving. There were no statistically significant changes from 2009 to 2015.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported their usage of text messaging or email while driving, Halton Region, 2009-2015

Sex

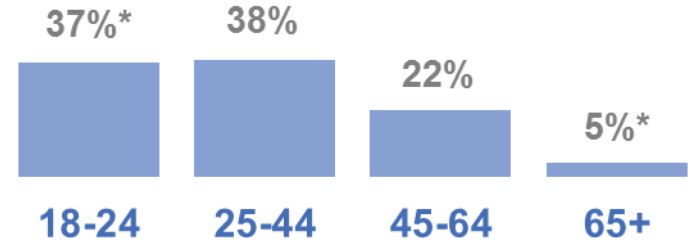
In 2015, Halton males were more likely than females to report ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving, by sex, Halton Region, 2015

Age

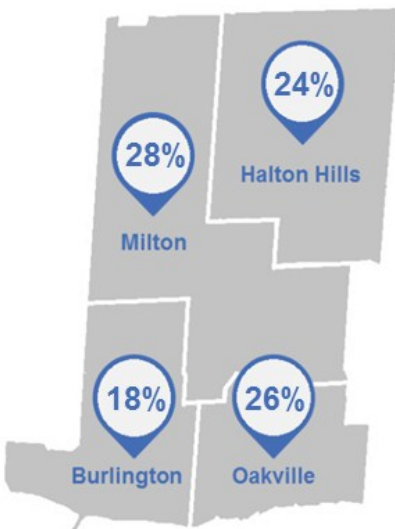
In 2015, Halton adults aged 65+ were less likely than all other age groups to report ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving and these differences were **statistically significant**. Adults aged 45-64 were less likely than adults aged 25-44 to report ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving, by age, Halton Region, 2015

Municipality

In 2015, there were no statistically significant differences by municipality in the percentage of Halton adults who reported ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving, by municipality, Halton Region, 2015

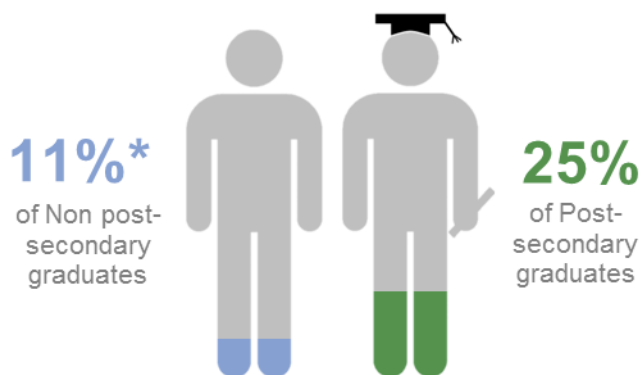
Income

In 2015, the percentage of Halton adults who reported ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving increased as income increased. This difference was **statistically significant** when comparing the lowest income group to the highest income group.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving, by income, Halton Region, 2015

In 2015, the percentage of Halton adults who reported ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving was higher among those who were post-secondary graduates compared to those who were not post-secondary graduates, and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 25 and over who reported ever sending or reading a text message or email while driving, by education, Halton Region, 2014

For more information on RRFSS, methods, statistical significance and limitations associated with health indicator reports, please see the Data Notes and Guide available at www.halton.ca

Definitions:

Mobile Device refers to a device such as a cell phone, smartphone, tablet or any other wireless device that can be used for phone calls, text messaging or email. **Hands-Free Device** refers to mobile phone accessories that enable an individual to use a mobile phone without holding it. Examples include Bluetooth headsets and speakers.

Data Source: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System [2009, 2010, 2012, 2015], Halton Region Health Department and Institute for Social Research, York University.

Limitations: Adults who had not driven a motor vehicle within the past 12 months, insisted they did not drive, or who did not have a cell phone were excluded from analysis. Those who responded that they only talk on a hand-held wireless device when they are pulled over to the side of the road were included with the never responses. Don't know and refused responses were excluded from the analysis. All answers are self-reported. As the use of a mobile device while driving is illegal, the use of mobile devices while driving may be underreported.

Estimates marked with an asterisk (*) should be interpreted with caution due to high variability. Estimates marked with a double asterisk (**) are not reportable.

References

1. Ontario Ministry of Transportation. 2016. Distracted Driving. Accessed October 2016 from <https://www.ontario.ca/page/distracted-driving>
2. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. 2009. Bill 118, Countering Distracted Driving and Promoting Green Transportation Act, 2009. Accessed October 2016 from http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=2099
3. Ontario Ministry of Transportation. 2015. Bill 31. Accessed October 2016 from <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/bill-31.shtml>

For more health indicator and health status reports, visit the Halton Health Statistics website at www.halton.ca

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