

Editorial ? Concentrate on driving

Ontario Provincial Police are about to start a campaign next week aimed at raising awareness and enforcement of distracted driving. This is in light of recent statistics that indicate people who text or talk on hand-held devices while at the wheel are responsible for more traffic fatalities than probably most of us suspected.

According to a release issued by OPP earlier this week, 2013 saw 78 people killed in mishaps they investigated which were related to distracted driving. That's substantially more than the 57 people who died in crashes involving impaired driving and 44 in speed-related incidents. Granted, these statistics only involve incidents investigated by OPP, but the numbers are a little too hard to shrug off.

We live in a society of very busy people, and the idea of trying to save time by performing extra tasks while driving can certainly be tempting. But there is very little tempting about being involved in an accident in which someone is killed.

When you consider the overall impact of these 78 fatalities last year and the 325 other distracted driving victims who have died since 2010, the number of people these irresponsible drivers have had a profound and devastating impact on is in the thousands, OPP Deputy Commissioner Brad Blair, commander of traffic safety and operational support, said. Everyone, from the victims' families and friends to the police officers who attend these horrific collision scenes and have to notify next-of-kin, knows the emotional impact of one life lost to this senseless driving behavior trickles down to so many people who, sadly, through experience, know how badly this behaviour needs to stop.

It's hard to argue against that, isn't it?