

Texting at red lights is a dangerous habit, says CAA

One third (33 per cent) of Canadians admit they have texted while stopped at a red light in the last month, says a poll released last week by the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA).

That is despite evidence that a driver's mind could still be distracted and not on the task of driving for up to 27 seconds after interacting with the phone — much longer than the time it takes to drive through an intersection.

“These numbers are troubling,” said Jeff Walker, vice-president of public affairs for CAA National. “The effect of texting at a red light lingers well after the light turns green, making it a dangerous driving habit.”

And while nearly 70 per cent of Canadians believe using their phone at a red light is unacceptable, this has not stopped people from doing it.

“It's socially unacceptable to drive drunk, and that's where we need to get with texting,” Walker remarked. “Attitudes are beginning to shift, but our actions need to follow.”