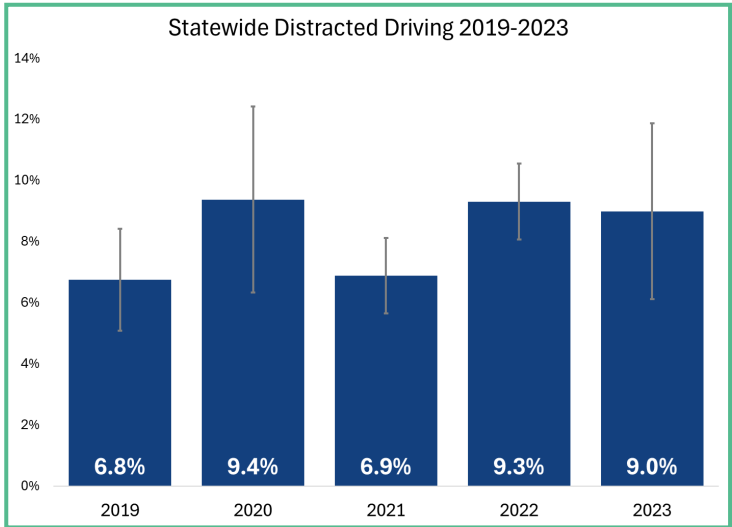


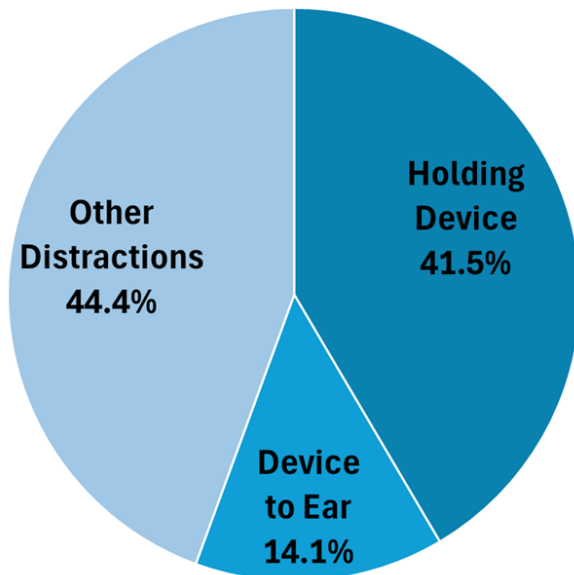


Distracted Driving Observation Survey Results

Driver distraction includes all activities that divert attention and full engagement from the task of driving. Washington law [RCW 46.61.672](#) bans all hand-held cell phone use while driving, even when stopped in traffic, punishable as a primary traffic offense; [RCW 46.61.673](#) defines “dangerously distracted” as a secondary traffic offense. Since 2019, the WTSC has conducted an annual observation survey of driver distractions to monitor the incidence of this dangerous behavior. Data is collected during the month of June at 375 locations across the state. The data is weighted based on several time and location factors to derive estimates of distracted driving in Washington state.



Type of Driver Distraction 2023



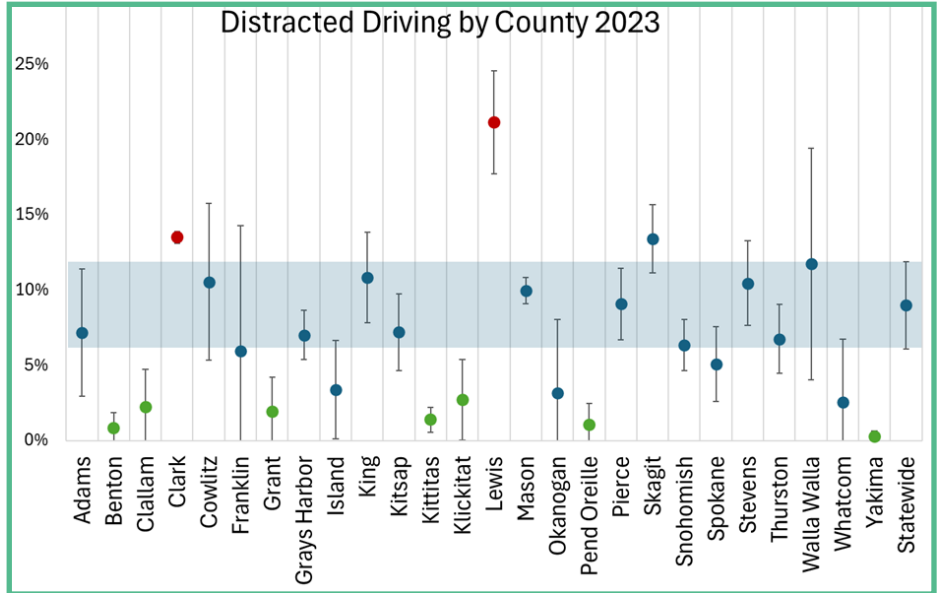
Did you know?

- ⇒ Most drivers in Washington do not drive distracted; over 90% are fully engaged with the driving task.
- ⇒ More than 80% of Washingtonians believe it is extremely dangerous for drivers to interact with their cell phones while driving and support enforcement of distracted driving prevention laws¹.
- ⇒ More than 95% of Washingtonians would be comfortable asking a driver using their cell phone or otherwise driving distracted to focus on driving¹.
- ⇒ The statewide level of distracted driving did not change in 2023 (9.0%) compared to the level in 2022 (9.3%) and in 2020 (9.4%).
- ⇒ The level of distracted driving was lowest in 2019, one year following the passage of stronger distracted driving laws, and in 2021 following an increase in many high-risk traffic behaviors recorded in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, since 2022 the level of distracted driving has remained elevated matching the level measured in 2020.
- ⇒ The most common type of distraction is from device use. Other sources of driver distractions included eating/drinking, grooming, reading, or interacting with passengers/pets in a way that interfered with driving.
- ⇒ In 2023 over 150 people were killed in distraction involved crashes and more than 600 people were seriously injured².

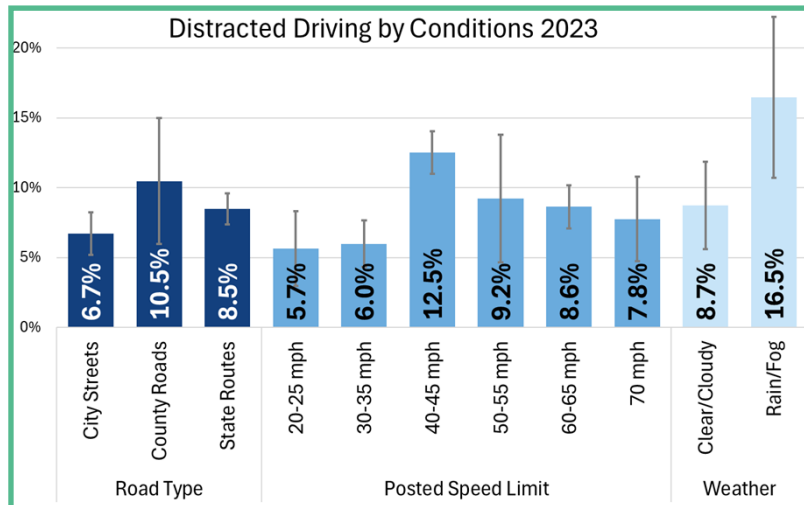


Distracted Driving Observation Survey Results

Most counties have distracted driving levels statistically similar to the state level of 9.3% although this varied by county. In 2023, seven counties (Benton, Clallam, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Pend Oreille, and Yakima) had distracted driving levels statistically lower than the state and all under 5%. Two counties, Clark and Lewis, had distracted driving levels statistically higher than the state. Distracted driving was highest in Lewis county at one in five drivers compared to one in ten drivers statewide. Yakima county had the lowest distracted driving level at nearly 0%.



Distracted driving was highest on county roads, most of which have posted speeds of 40-45 mph (the posted speed limit with the highest level of distracted driving). In 2023, drivers on city streets had the lowest level of distracted driving. Statewide, drivers were more likely to drive distracted in less fair weather (rain/fog) than in fair weather, a behavior also found in national studies of distracted driving³.



Adams	7.2%
Benton	0.8%
Clallam	2.2%
Clark	13.5%
Cowlitz	10.6%
Franklin	6.0%
Grant	1.9%
Grays Harbor	7.0%
Island	3.4%
King	10.8%
Kitsap	7.2%
Kittitas	1.4%
Klickitat	2.7%
Lewis	21.2%
Mason	10.0%
Okanogan	3.2%
Pend Oreille	1.1%
Pierce	9.1%
Skagit	13.4%
Snohomish	6.3%
Spokane	5.1%
Stevens	10.5%
Thurston	6.8%
Walla Walla	11.8%
Whatcom	2.5%
Yakima	0.3%

Did you know?

- ⇒ Drivers were more likely to be distracted on roads with higher posted speed limits (40 mph or more) versus on roads with lower posted speed limits (35 mph or less).
- ⇒ Drivers were more likely to drive distracted when it was raining or foggy versus when it was clear or cloudy weather.

References:

1. WTSC Traffic Safety Survey (2023). <https://wtsc.wa.gov/traffic-safety-reports/#statewidesurvey>
2. WSDOT Crash Data Portal (April 2024). <https://remoteapps.wsdot.wa.gov/highwaysafety/collision/data/portal/public/>
3. NHTSA (Jan 2024). Driver Electronic Device Use in 2022. DOT HS 813 531. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813531>

Data Source:

The Washington State Annual Seat Belt and Distracted Driver Observation Survey is conducted with funding support from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). For more information regarding the survey methodology see the "Seat Belt Use in Washington State" report available at <https://wtsc.wa.gov/traffic-safety-reports/>.