

# Total Cell Phone Ban and Glancing at the Cell Phone

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Dear NETS Members,

October 6, 2011

Tom Bennett with ExxonMobil submitted a question concerning total cell phone bans.

Responses follow Tom's question.

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Thank you to those of you who provided responses.

Please contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Thank you,

Jack

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Executive Director  
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## QUESTION

For companies which ban the use of cell phones while driving, do any permit people to look at their phones to see who is calling so they may determine if the call is urgent?

Tom Bennett

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	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Total Cell Phone Ban and Glancing at the Cell Phone</b>
1	<b>Anonymous</b>	<p>I think it unlikely that every call from any particular person could automatically be determined as “urgent.” Thus, a call coming in from a family member or boss or client might or might not be urgent. Unless, of course, it is pre-arranged.</p> <p>If by looking at the phone it was considered to be an urgent call, would that result in the driver answering the call? If it IS an urgent call, does policy require the driver to safely pull over before engaging in the call? By their nature, “urgent” calls are likely to be much more distracting than every day, run of the mill calls....</p> <p>Might there be different gradations of urgency?? Urgent to one person could be pretty mundane to others – for example, the current generation of young employees to whom “staying in touch” is in their cultural genes.</p> <p>I’d be curious as to how this could be effectively managed.</p>
2	<b>Anonymous</b>	<p>Our policy does not permit the practice of screening calls to see if the call is urgent. The driver is expected to pull to the side of the road and stop the vehicle prior to engaging in any activity with his/her cell phone.</p>
3	<b>Abbott</b> <b>Joe McKillips</b> <u><a href="mailto:Joseph.McKillips@abbott.com">Joseph.McKillips@abbott.com</a></u>	<p>We direct our employees to refrain from answering or making any calls in their vehicle regardless of hands-held or hands-free. As such, "looking down" to see who is calling and the level of urgency would be prohibited as well.</p>
4	<b>BMS</b> <b>Wendy Dymkowski</b> <u><a href="mailto:wendy.dymkowski@bms.com">wendy.dymkowski@bms.com</a></u>	<p>In answer to Tom’s question, no. Our policy is “Drivers must pull over and park in a safe place when using cellular phones or any other mobile electronic devices.”</p>
5	<b>BP</b> <b>Ken Daigle</b> <u><a href="mailto:Kenneth.Daigle@bp.com">Kenneth.Daigle@bp.com</a></u>	<p>Our policy does not explicitly state whether a person can or cannot look at their phone display to view an incoming call, but the expectation is that they do not use their phones in any way that would divert their attention and cause a distraction. If they needed to check to see if a call was urgent, we would expect them to pull off the road, stop the vehicle and check their phone</p>

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		while the vehicle is safely parked.
6	<b>GE</b> <i>Jeri Hall</i> <a href="mailto:Jeri.Hall@med.ge.com">Jeri.Hall@med.ge.com</a>	GE does not ban cell phone use while driving, but our policy is to find a safe place to park to take calls and respond to texts. No texting is allowed while driving.
7	<b>Kraft Foods</b> <i>Jeff Jones</i> <a href="mailto:jjones@kraftfoods.com">jjones@kraftfoods.com</a>	In groups where we ban phone use while driving, we have not specifically stopped the practice of reviewing the caller ID to see if it is a call the driver wants to take. What is required is that the truck be parked and out of the flow of traffic before the phone is used.
8	<b>PSE&amp;G</b> <i>Lee Wallace</i> <a href="mailto:Lee.Wallace@pseg.com">Lee.Wallace@pseg.com</a>	We prefer the individual put their cell phone away so there's no temptation to look at it.
9	<b>Roche Diagnostics-Canada</b> <i>Francine Seguin</i> <a href="mailto:francine.seguin@roche.com">francine.seguin@roche.com</a>	At the moment, we prefer drivers to let the call go to a messaging service. However, we are currently reviewing our cell phone policy.
10	<b>Sanofi-aventis</b> <i>Tom Cosentino</i> <a href="mailto:Thomas.Cosentino@sanofi-aventis.com">Thomas.Cosentino@sanofi-aventis.com</a>	Our recommendation is to turn your cell phone off and let it go to voice mail.
11	<b>Shell</b> <i>Mike Watson</i> <a href="mailto:Mike.Watson@shell.com">Mike.Watson@shell.com</a>	<p>For Shell the answer is no. We tell people to pull over to a safe place. Then they can look at text messages, missed calls, check phone messages, make calls, etc.</p> <p>Further to the answer on the subject.....</p> <p>Shell recommends "Engine On, Phone Off" which removes the temptation for the driver to pick up the phone should it ring while they're driving. Drivers will switch on their phone when they reach their next rest stop or their destination to check for messages.</p> <p>Note: if you leave a phone on the silent most phones will light up and vibrate when receiving a call which can distract the driver.</p> <p>If phones are to be left switched on then they should be in a</p>

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		position, glove box or a bag, well out of reach of the driver so they are not tempted to look at it.
12	<b>Sunoco</b> <b>Bill Sanicki</b> <u><a href="mailto:WMSANICKY@sunoco.com">WMSANICKY@sunoco.com</a></u>	<p>No...</p> <p>We have scripted messages to tell the caller that the employee may be driving, therefore, be patient and your call will be returned.</p>
13	<b>Spectra Energy</b> <b>Kevin Wright</b> <u><a href="mailto:KPWright@uniongas.com">KPWright@uniongas.com</a></u>	<p>It is the intent of our distracted driving policy to prevent actions that draw attention away from the driving task. These tasks could include checking the screen of the phone to see who is calling. Although not explicitly detailed in writing, we feel that this action is covered by the "receiving calls" aspect of the policy section noted below.</p> <p><b><u>According to our Distracted Driving Policy:</u></b>          Safely operating a motor vehicle requires a driver's total attention. Anything that diverts a driver's attention from safely operating the vehicle is a distraction.</p> <p>Drivers are <b>prohibited</b> from using cellular telephones, from utilizing any hands free devices (e.g. blue-tooth), pagers, two way radios, laptops or other electronic devices except when the vehicle is properly parked in a rest area, designated parking area, or other safe location. This includes placing or receiving calls, pages, text messages or emails. This does not prohibit having the electronic device turned on and operational while operating a vehicle.</p>
14	<b>Xerox</b> <b>Mike McAlister</b> <u><a href="mailto:Michael.Mcalister@xerox.com">Michael.Mcalister@xerox.com</a></u>	<p><b><u>Policy:</u></b></p> <p>Drivers are prohibited from using handheld portable communication devices or handheld electronic devices during the operation of a Company Vehicle or Personal Motor Vehicle while conducting Company Business. Drivers should initiate calls, receive calls, text message or make electronic inquiries while the vehicle is stopped in a protected area. Wireless telephone use is allowed with a hands free device when the operator's attention to driving is not impaired by such use and permitted by applicable law.</p>

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		<p><b>Guidance:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Driver's are to be focused on driving safely and avoiding any activity that is distracting during the operation of a motor vehicle on Company Business.</li><li>2. If "hands free" technology is <u>not</u> in place:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Incoming calls should be forwarded to voice mail; and messages retrieved once the vehicle is stopped and parked in a protected area</li><li>b. Outgoing calls/messages are only to be placed when the vehicle is stopped and parked in a protected area.</li></ol><p>Note: A protected area is free of high speed vehicular traffic (i.e. parking space or highway rest area). The vehicle should never be stopped on the shoulder of the road, highway, or access ramp, unless there is a critical emergency (mechanical failure, driver illness, car fire, blown out tire).</p></li><li>3. "Hands-free" devices that offer automatic voice-dialing; and vehicles equipped with Hands Free Blue Tooth hardware; are believed to reduce the risk of inattentiveness when dialing and conversation. However, these devices are still a potential source of inattentiveness and should be used with caution and be kept to a minimum.</li></ol> <p>Operating a portable communication device while driving on company business may be considered a contributing cause if an employee is subsequently involved in an accident. This is at the discretion of the Manager conducting the accident investigation.</p>
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