

Alert No 11/2015

This safety alert has been prepared by the RSTA. Completed forms for adding to the RSTA website should be submitted to Clive Mitchell [clive@rsta-uk.org](mailto:clive@rsta-uk.org) For further information regarding this safety alert please email Clive or phone 07557529410

**Safety Alert**

**Driver Jailed Over Death after Texting at the Wheel**

A female driver, 29 was sentenced at Teeside Crown Court for causing the death by dangerous driving to another driver – a man aged 25, in December 2011.

The Skoda car in which he was travelling was stationary because of a puncture at the time of the crash the man was standing behind it while the wheel was being changed.

He suffered traumatic injuries and was pronounced dead at the scene on the northbound carriageway of the A19 near Northallerton.

The drier did not see the stricken car until it was too late to avoid a crash. “Other motorists were able to pull out as they approached the Skoda!, said the prosecutor, who added: “The defendant had her head in her phone”.

The defendant was employed as a delivery driver, was driving a Fiesta van and had been texting on her mobile phone and had driven 500 to 600 miles that day in the works



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van, deleted the message before dialling 999 to summon emergency services to the scene near Mount Grace Priory in North Yorkshire.

He told the court: “The evidence shows in the 30 minutes before the collision, the defendant was using her Blackberry to send and read texts.” She sent two & read three, and was reading the final text rather than looking at the road before the collision. They were not urgent matters, and amounted to little more than idle banter. “She had been reading and composing text messages over a lengthy period of time prior to impact while driving at motorway speeds on a winter’s night”.

As well as receiving three years’ imprisonment, the driver was also disqualified from driving for six years and will have to take an extended driving test.





  Traffic Sergeant John Lumbard, of North Yorkshire Police’s roads policing group, said:

“The defendant has fully accepted that she is responsible for the tragic death of an innocent bystander due to a serious error of judgment. I want this tragedy to send a very clear message to drivers that using mobile phones whilst driving can and does lead to horrific consequences.” Research from around the world has shown time and time again that this behaviour does cause drivers to lose concentration on the road ahead.

“Ideally you should turn phones off while you are driving so that you are not distracted by an unexpected call. However, if you must us a phone while on the move, it is essential that you use a hands-free kit”.

“As well as leaving one man dead, the collision has left a family grieving for their loss and a young woman with the knowledge that she is responsible for his untimely death.

DON’T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU

REMEMBER THE LIFE SAVING RULES – DRIVING

NEVER USE A HAND-HELD DEVICE OR PROGRAMME ANY HANDS-FREE DEVICE WHILE YOU ARE DRIVNG A ROAD VEHICLE

EVERYONE HOME SAFE EVERY DAY

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