

**County Executive
Of
Howard County, Maryland**

Executive Order: 2009 – 03

Dated: April 15, 2009

Subject: Prohibition Against Texting and
Using Email While Operating a County
Vehicle

WHEREAS, text messaging, or texting, and emailing with cell phones and other electronic devices is a convenient and efficient method of electronic communication, but the act of texting or emailing while driving can divert attention from the focus required for safe driving; and

WHEREAS, according to an analysis by the Maryland Department of Legislative Services, driving while texting appears to be a growing trend, with one study estimating that 20% of all drivers send or receive text messages; and

WHEREAS, the same analysis indicates that driver inattention is a factor in an estimated 80% of motor vehicle crashes and 65% of near crashes, with the result that driver distraction appears to be a factor in about 4.9 million accidents, causing 34,000 fatalities and 2.1 million injuries; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of County employees, county residents and motorists who use the streets and highways in the county to establish rules that enable County employees to operate County vehicles in the safest possible manner.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED by the County Executive of Howard County, Maryland that a County employee shall not use a hand-held electronic device to write, send or read text messages or email while operating a County vehicle.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that this prohibition does not apply to a County employee in a County vehicle that is parked outside the travel portion of a roadway, as that term is defined in the Transportation Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, Ken Ulman, as County Executive of Howard County, Maryland have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of Howard County to be affixed this _____ day of April, 2009.

Ken Ulman
County Executive