

DISTRACTED DRIVING



In July 2015, the State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company (State Farm®) Strategic Resources Department conducted an online survey with adults 18 or older to examine drivers' attitudes and behaviors related to distracted driving. This survey was the seventh wave of a study first conducted in August 2009. This report highlights results from this research.

Summary

Drivers generally realize how distracting cellphone and/or smartphone-related behaviors can be while driving, support measures to restrict cellphone use while driving, and agree with harsh penalties for crashes resulting from cellphone use. However, the prevalence of some of these behaviors, notably those involving smartphones, continue to increase each year. This increase may be partly explained by the increase in smartphone ownership each year. Among the more encouraging trends, the frequency of texting while driving has remained relatively stable, and talking on a hand-held cellphone while driving has continued to decrease to the point that it is now slightly less prevalent than talking on a hands-free cellphone.

Age is an important factor in terms of distracted driving perceptions and behavior. Younger age groups perceive many of these behaviors as less distracting and report being more likely to participate in these behaviors compared to older age groups. Another important factor is the driving environment/situation. For instance, some drivers report being more likely to use their cellphone when stopped at a red light and driving on an open highway/interstate.

In sum, the takeaways and trends within this report demonstrate the need for continued research to understand the perceptions, person factors (e.g., age) and situation factors that influence distracted driving behavior, as well as continued educational, technological and legislative efforts to mitigate these types of behaviors.

Drivers perceive many behaviors as distracting, yet they still report participating in them.

Respondents tended to perceive the most distracting behaviors to involve activities that take drivers' eyes off the road and hands off the wheel. These activities included text messaging, taking pictures, recording video and accessing social media networks, email or the Internet

in general. For all of these activities, more than nine in 10 indicated that the activities were at least somewhat distracting, with over seven in 10 indicating that the activities were very distracting.

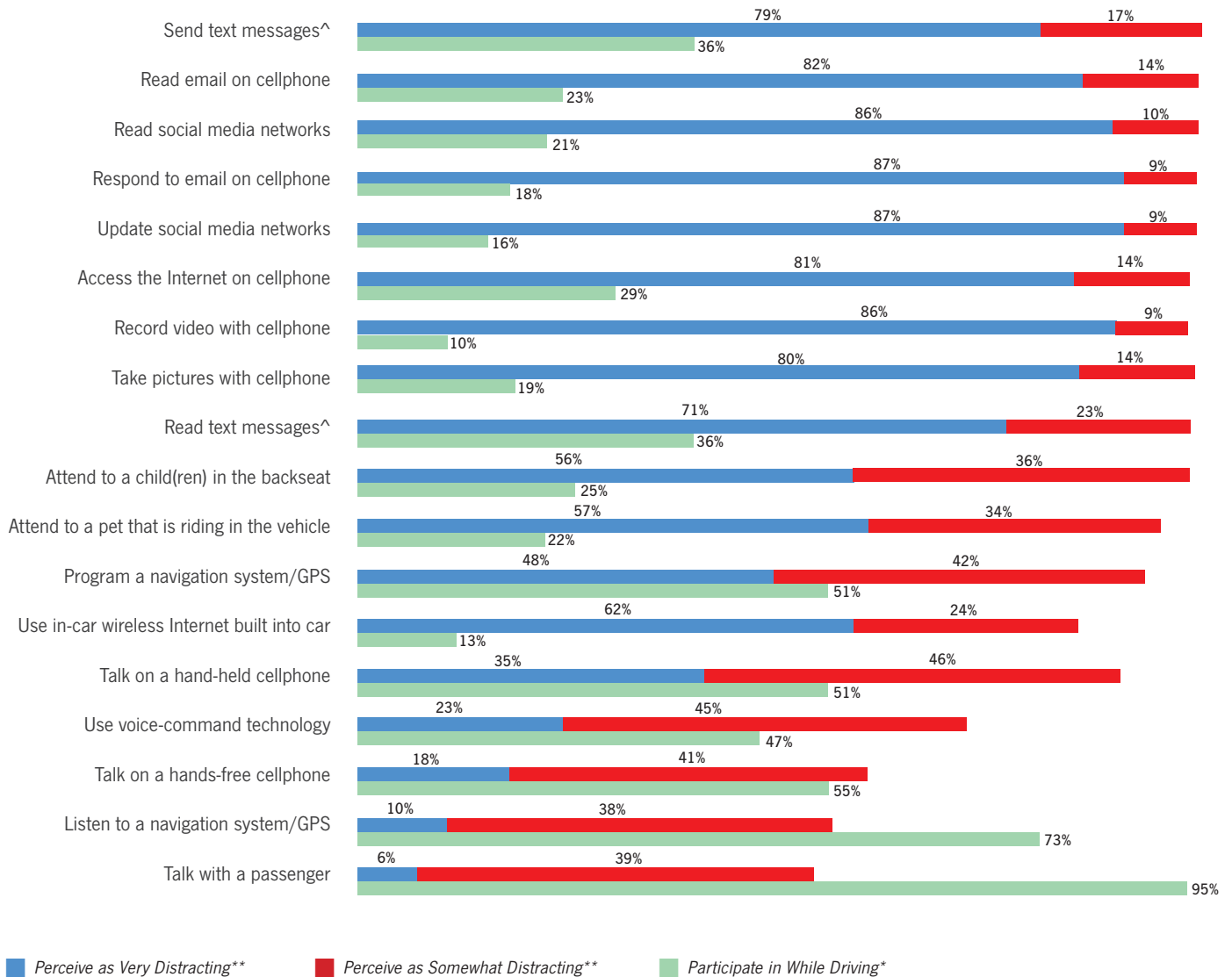
Despite these perceptions, a considerable percentage of respondents indicated that they participate in these behaviors. Some of the more notable discrepancies include:

- Text messaging: Over 94 percent indicated that sending and/or reading text messages was at least somewhat distracting, yet 36 percent reported text messaging while driving.
- Programming a navigation system: Nine in 10 indicated it was at least somewhat distracting, yet over half reported doing this activity while driving. Note that the percentage of respondents who reported doing this activity has trended upward at a significant rate since 2009 (see the table on page 4).
- Accessing the Internet: Nearly three in 10 reported accessing the Internet while driving despite 95 percent reporting that the behavior is at least somewhat distracting.

Compared to the younger demographic, individuals who are 40 years of age and older perceive most distracted driving behaviors as more distracting.

Aside from talking with a passenger, attending to children and listening to directions from a GPS, in most cases, respondents who were 40 and older were more likely than those 18-29 years of age, and in many cases more likely than those 30-39 years of age, to perceive the behaviors as very distracting, whereas those 18-39 years of age were more likely to say that these behaviors were only somewhat distracting.

Percentage of Drivers Who Perceive Activities as Distracting and Percentage Who Participate in Them



*Of the total respondents, these are respondents who had a valid driver's license, owned a cellphone and drove between one and 80 hours per week. Driving was defined as any time the car was en route to a destination, including being stopped in traffic or at a stoplight. n = 856

**For the survey item asking how distracting these activities are, other response options included "Not at all distracting" and "Don't know." For each activity, those who chose "Don't know" were excluded from the analysis for that particular activity. n ranges from 673 to 887

^For the survey item asking respondents if they participated in the activity, the item did not distinguish between reading text messages and sending text messages. Thus, the percentage that participated in "text messaging" is shown for both activities.

Smartphone-related distracted driving behaviors continue to increase.

As reported last year, many smartphone-related distracting behaviors have significantly increased since the beginning of this study in 2009. In 2015, behaviors that continued to notably increase since 2014 included using a hands-free device to talk on a cellphone, listening to and programming a navigation system/GPS and accessing the Internet. Additionally, using in-car wireless Internet built into a vehicle significantly increased from seven percent in 2014 to 13 percent in 2015. On a more positive note, talking on a hand-held cellphone has continued to decrease in 2015 and is now slightly less common than talking on a hands-free device. However, over half of respondents still reported talking on a hand-held cellphone.

Results from new survey items added in 2015 reveal the prevalence of more potentially dangerous behaviors.

Nearly two in 10 drivers reported taking pictures with their cellphone while driving, and one in 10 reported recording

video — activities that can take drivers' eyes off the road and hands off the wheel. In addition to phones, people and pets can be considerable distractions. A quarter of respondents reported attending to children while driving, and over two in 10 reported attending to pets.

Many distracted driving behaviors are more common among younger age groups.

In general, adults younger than 40 years of age are more likely than those 40 and older to report talking on a hand-held cellphone, texting on a cellphone, listening to and programming a navigation system/GPS and performing many smartphone-related behaviors (i.e., accessing the Internet, reading/responding to email, reading/updating social media). Additionally, 18-29 year-olds are more likely than those 40 and older to report taking pictures and recording video with a cellphone, using voice-command technology and attending to a pet that is riding in the vehicle.

A few distracted driving behaviors are more common among those living in metropolitan areas.

Respondents living in a large metropolitan area with over one million people were more likely than those living in a rural or small town with less than 75,000 people to report programming a GPS (57 percent vs. 44 percent), reading email (27 percent vs. 16 percent) and responding to email (22 percent vs. 13 percent) while driving. City drivers may be more likely to participate in these behaviors than rural drivers due to the effects of the driving situation — being stopped at red lights tends to increase these types of behaviors, especially for city drivers (see page 6 for more detail). Additionally, city drivers may be more likely than rural drivers to have a need to program a GPS given more complex directions and the desire for routes that avoid traffic.

Activities Drivers Participate in While Driving New Activities in the Survey as of 2015

	All Drivers*	Drivers 18-29*
	2015 n = 856	2015 n = 185
Take pictures with cellphone	19%	38%
Record video with cellphone	10%	23%
Use voice-command technology for calls, texting or navigation	47%	62%
Talk with a passenger	95%	95%
Attend to a child(ren) in the backseat	25%	30%
Attend to a pet that is riding in the vehicle	22%	35%

*Of the total respondents, these are respondents who had a valid driver's license, owned a cellphone and drove between one and 80 hours per week.

Activities Drivers Participate in While Driving

	All Drivers*							Drivers Age 18-29*						
	2009 n = 851	2010 n = 899	2011 n = 881	2012 n = 872	2013 n = 880	2014 n = 862	2015 n = 856	2009 n = 194	2010 n = 202	2011 n = 189	2012 n = 187	2013 n = 181	2014 n = 187	2015 n = 185
Talk on a hand-held cellphone	65%	62%	58%	57%	57%	55%	51%	78%	84%	70%	74%	77%	64%	73%
Talk on a hands-free cellphone	42%	39%	41%	38%	50%	51%	55%	53%	45%	45%	42%	53%	54%	62%
Text message	31%	31%	32%	34%	35%	33%	36%	71%	71%	64%	68%	69%	58%	64%
Listen to a navigation system/GPS	41%	47%	53%	56%	65%	70%	73%	57%	64%	67%	70%	76%	81%	84%
Program a navigation system/GPS	30%	33%	36%	36%	44%	48%	51%	54%	62%	61%	57%	68%	65%	77%
Access the Internet on cellphone	13%	17%	18%	21%	24%	26%	29%	29%	43%	43%	48%	49%	48%	54%
Read email on cellphone	15%	17%	21%	22%	24%	25%	23%	32%	37%	46%	43%	41%	43%	41%
Respond to email on cellphone	12%	12%	15%	16%	16%	18%	18%	27%	26%	28%	29%	31%	31%	33%
Read social media networks	9%	11%	14%	15%	17%	20%	21%	21%	28%	37%	36%	37%	41%	44%
Update social media networks	9%	8%	13%	13%	13%	14%	16%	20%	23%	33%	30%	28%	30%	34%
Use in-car wireless Internet built into car	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7%	7%	13%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	11%	9%	20%

*Of the total respondents, these are respondents who had a valid driver's license, owned a cellphone and drove between one and 80 hours per week.

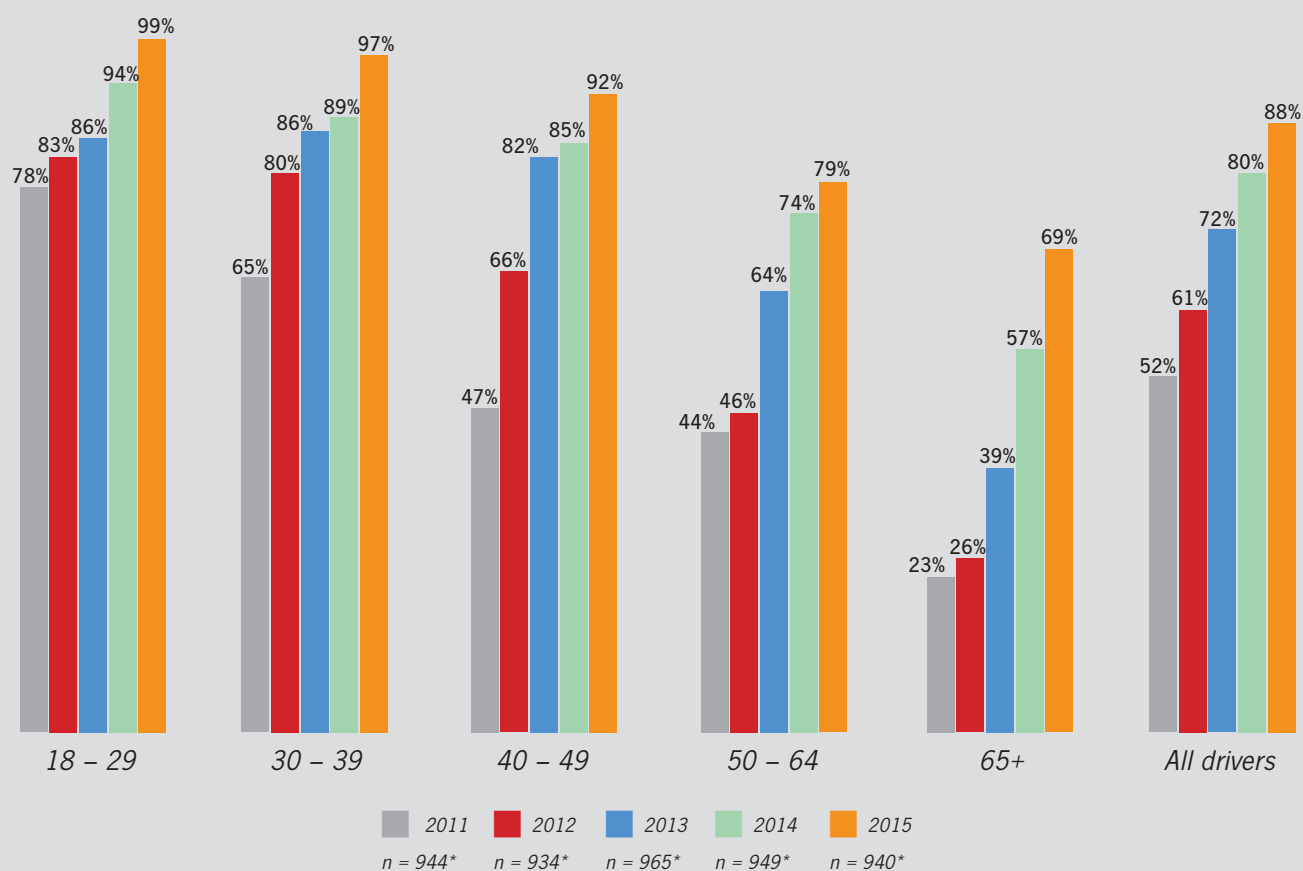
Note: Not all increases or decreases in percentages over time are statistically significant. This report highlights the most meaningful statistically significant differences between years.

Smartphone ownership continues to increase.

Among all drivers with a cellphone, the percentage of respondents who reported owning a smartphone has significantly increased every year since 2011. This increase in ownership enables more drivers to take part in smartphone-related distracted driving, which can at least partly explain the observed increases in these behaviors.

For each age group, smartphone ownership has significantly increased since 2013. Nearly all adults under 40 years of age reported having a smartphone in 2015. Nearly 70 percent of those 65 or older have a smartphone, an increase of 30 percentage points since 2013.

Percentage of Drivers Who Own a Smartphone*

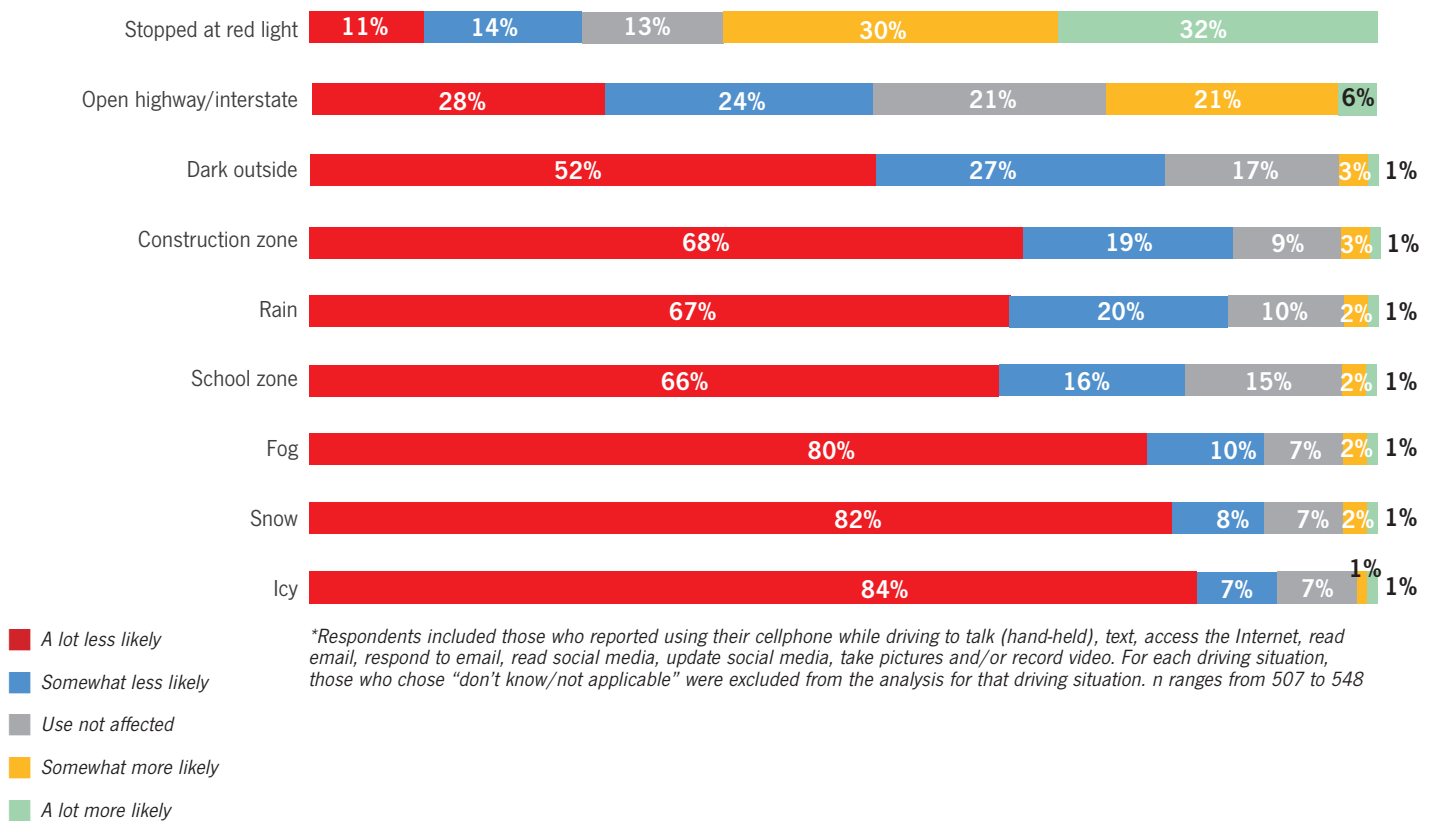


*Of the total respondents, these are respondents who had a valid driver's license and owned a cellphone. Smartphone ownership results are not available for 2009-2010.

Driving situations can play an important role in drivers' decisions to participate in cellphone-related distracted driving behaviors that involve looking at the cellphone and interacting with the screen and/or buttons.

- Sixty-two percent of drivers who use their cellphone while driving reported that being stopped at a red light makes them more likely to use their cellphone compared to when the vehicle is in motion.
- Respondents living in a large metropolitan area with over one million people were more likely than those living in a rural or small town with less than 75,000 people to state that being stopped at a red light (71 percent vs. 54 percent) makes them more likely to physically interact with their phone.
- Over a quarter of respondents reported being more likely to use their cellphone when driving on an open highway/interstate compared to other types of roads and traffic conditions.

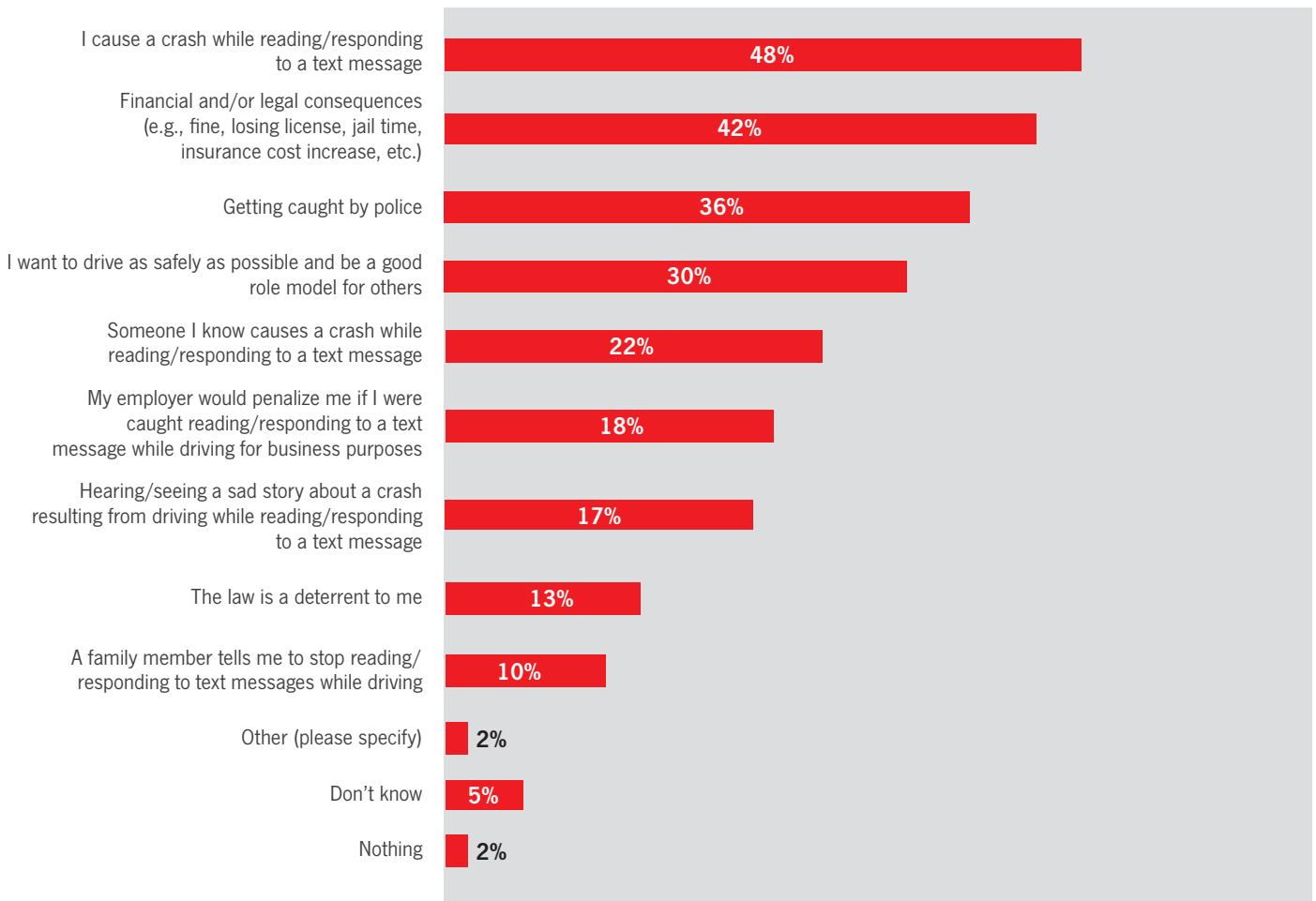
Think only about the times you use your cellphone while driving that require you to look at your cellphone and interact with the screen and/or buttons. How do the following driving situations affect your cellphone use while driving?



Drivers who regularly text behind the wheel are most likely to be deterred from texting if they cause a crash, face financial and/or legal consequences or get caught by police.

Roughly two in 10 drivers reported *reading* texts frequently or sometimes while driving, whereas 14 percent *respond* to texts at these frequencies while driving. Among these drivers, more than a third selected the following responses as the most likely deterrents to texting while driving; causing a crash, facing financial and/or legal consequences and getting caught by the police. Only two percent reported that nothing would deter them from text messaging while driving.

What, if anything, is most likely to deter you from reading or responding to text messages while driving*? (Select up to 3)



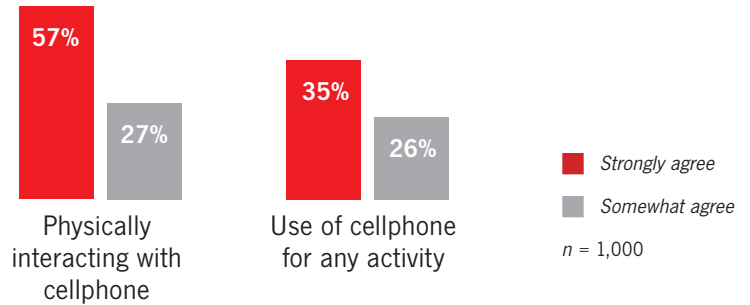
*Respondents included individuals who reported reading or responding to text messages "sometimes" or "frequently" while driving. n = 196

Respondents generally support laws governing the use of cellphones while driving, but over half feel that these laws are infrequently enforced. Respondents are slightly less likely to support technology to prohibit cellphone use compared to laws.

More than half of respondents indicated that laws are enforced to little or no extent for sending/receiving text messages or emails while driving (51 percent) and making/receiving calls while driving (58 percent). However, 84 percent of respondents are supportive of these laws for prohibiting cellphone use that requires physically interacting with the cellphone, and 61 percent are supportive of laws prohibiting the use of the cellphone for any activity (including hands-free talking).

Given difficulties with enforcing these laws and respondents' perceptions that the laws are infrequently enforced, one potential alternative could be technology that prohibits cellphone use. However, respondents are slightly less supportive of technology than laws, with 64 percent supporting technology for prohibiting text messaging and less than half (45 percent) supporting technology that would prohibit making/receiving calls.

Do you agree or disagree with a measure that would prohibit people from physically interacting with a hand-held cellphone or using a cellphone for any activity while driving under normal, everyday circumstances (not emergency situations)?



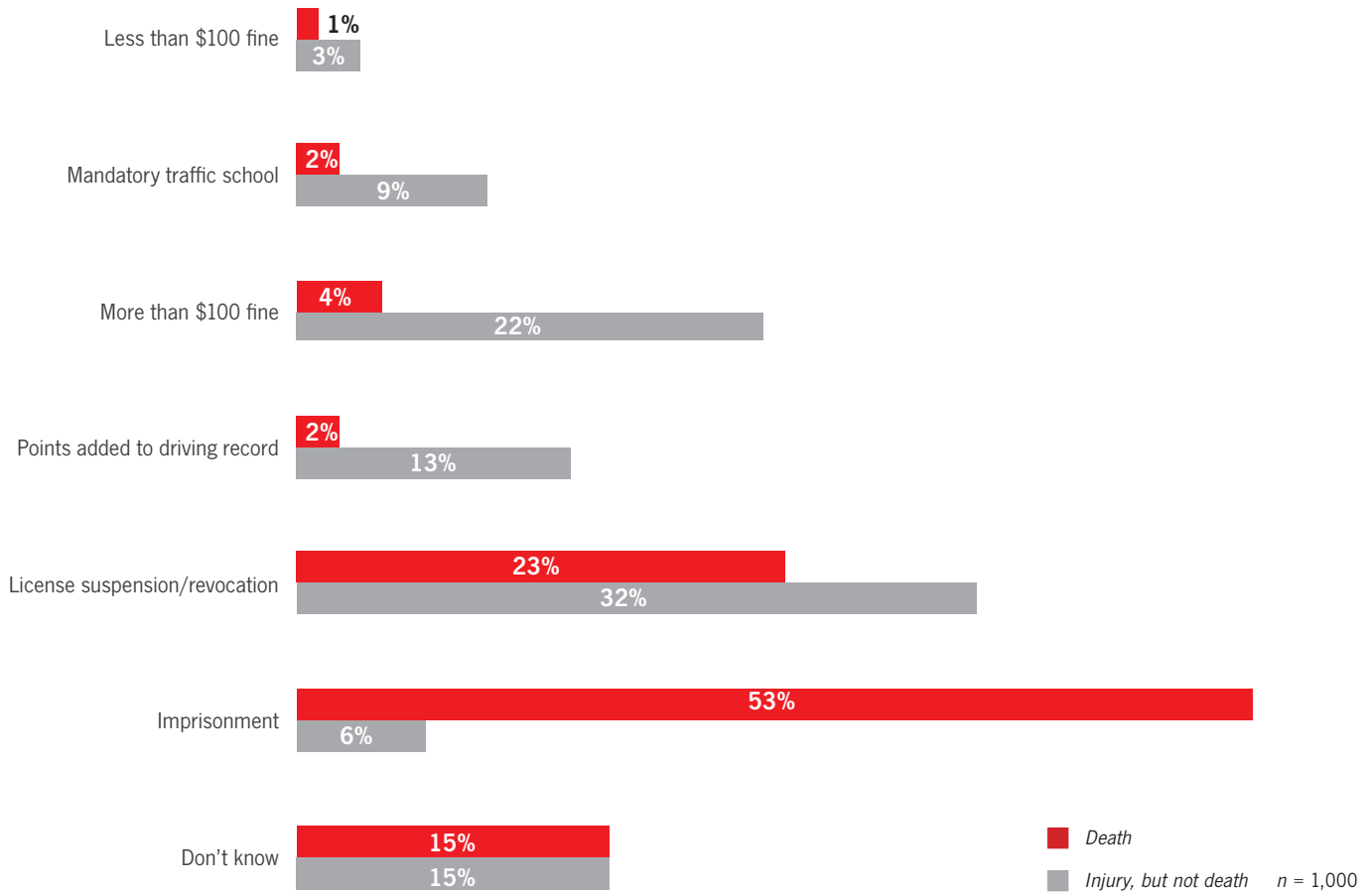
How likely are you to support technology that would prohibit using a cellphone for making/receiving calls or receiving/responding to text messages while driving (except in emergency situations)?



Consistent with previous waves of this study, imprisonment and license suspension/revocation were the most commonly selected responses as the appropriate penalty for a driver that caused injury or death resulting from a crash while using a cellphone.

Over half of respondents thought that imprisonment was the most appropriate penalty for a cellphone-related crash that results in death. License suspension/revocation was selected by nearly one-third of respondents as the most appropriate penalty for a crash resulting in an injury.

What is the appropriate penalty for the driver who caused an accident while using a cellphone?



Methodology

In August 2009 and 2010, and each year in July from 2011 to 2015, the State Farm Strategic Resources Department used an outside panel vendor to conduct an online survey of U.S. consumers ages 18+. Survey responses were received from approximately 1,000 consumers each year, who identified themselves as having some insurance and financial responsibility for their household.