



NEWS

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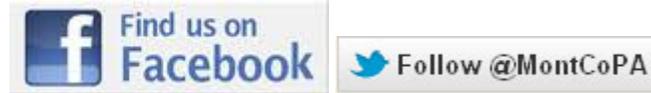
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 16, 2014

Montgomery County Commissioners, Health Department, Call on Residents to Pledge Never to Text and Drive

Norristown, PA (September 16, 2014) – The Montgomery County Commissioners and the Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) urge all residents to take the pledge to not text and drive. Friday, September 19, 2014 has been designated as Montgomery County Pledge Day as part of AT&T's It Can Wait® Distracted Driving Campaign. Community members, workplace staff, school faculties and students are encouraged to "Paint Montgomery County Blue" by wearing blue on September 19th to show support for safe driving. Take a picture dressed in blue and email the photo to publichealth@montcopa.org to be shared on MCHD's website and social media pages.

MCHD is committed to community outreach efforts that will reduce distracted driving behaviors, which are preventable driving risk factors. Visit www.itcanwait.com for additional information and resources. Take the pledge not to text and drive. Download a free cell phone application that, when activated, will automatically respond to any incoming calls or text messages received while driving.

"Thanks to the continued support of It Can Wait® advocates like the Montgomery County Health Department and county leaders, together we've inspired more than 5 million pledges to never text and drive," said AT&T Mid-Atlantic President J. Michael Schweder. "The movement has created strong momentum for change. We know that personal commitments, shared commitments, and technology are the most powerful tools to end texting and driving – and we salute Montgomery County for taking such a leadership role."

"I led the fight for a bill banning distracted driving when I was in the legislature, but that legislation punishes a driver after the fact," said Josh Shapiro, chair of the Montgomery County Commissioners and a former state representative. "It is important that we stop people from texting while driving to

prevent unnecessary accidents and deaths. That is why I applaud this effort by the health department to bring attention to this important issue.”

In Montgomery County, motor vehicle crashes continue to be the leading cause of injury and death in people 15-25 years of age. There were 1,224 crashes attributed to distracted driving in Montgomery County in 2012. Of those crashes, five were fatal and 614 resulted in injury. One of those five fatal crashes involved a teenager. Also in 2012, State Route 63 and State Route 73 had the highest number of distracted driving crashes.

MCHD’s Community Traffic Safety Project is focused on safety programming regarding seat belt usage, teen driving, impaired driving, and pedestrian safety, which are available to all schools in Montgomery County. All of these programs are provided to the community free of charge through funding made available from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

For more information, please contact Katie Kucz, Montgomery County Health Department, Health Promotion Division, at 610-278-5117ext.6787 or via email at kkucz@montcopa.org, or visit www.health.montcopa.org.