



## News Release

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# Students at Apollo High School Urged to Take Pledge to Keep Eyes on the Road, Not on Their Phones

## ***AT&T and Minnesota Safety Council Bring Virtual Reality Driving Simulator to School to Highlight Dangers of Distracted Driving***

**ST. CLOUD, Tuesday, May 10, 2016** – Students at Apollo High School learned today about the dangers of smartphone activities while driving and had the chance to experience the dangers firsthand when the AT&T *It Can Wait* virtual reality driving simulator visited the school.

AT&T and the Minnesota Safety Council brought the simulator to Apollo High School as part of the *It Can Wait*<sup>®</sup> campaign to remind students that smartphone activity should wait until after driving. Teens were also encouraged to sign a pledge to keep their eyes on the road and not on their phones.

“Too many of today’s drivers are engaging in unsafe activities behind the wheel with their smartphones when their focus should be on driving,” said Principal Adam Holm. “We want our students to understand how dangerous and potentially deadly this behavior can be. We hope our teens learn from the *It Can Wait* simulator and put down their phones when they are on the road.”

The *It Can Wait* simulator is visiting Apollo High School as part of AT&T’s nationwide tour to raise awareness about the dangers of distracted driving.

The effort is part of AT&T’s *It Can Wait*<sup>®</sup> campaign, which has expanded from a focus on texting while driving to include other smartphone activities now common behind the wheel.

“When we launched the *It Can Wait* campaign five years ago, our message was simple – no text is worth a life,” said Paul Weirtz, president of AT&T Minnesota. “The same applies to other smartphone activities. We are urging drivers, especially teens, to keep their eyes on the road and not on their phones.”

In Minnesota, it is illegal for drivers to read, compose or send texts/emails, and access the Internet on a wireless device while the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic, such as at a stoplight or stuck in traffic.

“Driving is not only a privilege, but an obligation. We all have the obligation to drive safely for our sake, and for the sake of our passengers and everyone else on the road,” said State Senator John Pederson. “When we use our smartphones while driving, our focus and attention is not where it should be: on the road. If you are behind the wheel, it can wait.”

New [research](#) from AT&T shows 7 in 10 people engage in smartphone activities while driving. Texting and emailing are still the most prevalent, but 4 in 10 drivers also tap into social media. Over 25 percent are on Facebook, 1 in 7 are on Twitter, almost 3 in 10 surf the net, and surprisingly, 1 in 10 video chat.

AT&T first launched the *It Can Wait*<sup>®</sup> campaign in 2010 to educate the public about the dangers of texting while driving and encourage people to take the pledge to not text and drive at [www.ItCanWait.com](http://www.ItCanWait.com).

The *It Can Wait* campaign has inspired over 8 million pledges not to text and drive across the country. Visit [www.ItCanWait.com](http://www.ItCanWait.com) to learn more.

The Minnesota Safety Council is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to preventing injuries on the road, at work, at home, and in the community. For more information, see [www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org](http://www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org).

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