



News Release

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Students at Stillwater Area 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

STILLWATER, Friday, May 13, 2016 – Students at Stillwater Area 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 Stillwater Area High School as part of the [*It Can Wait*](#)[®] 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.

“In today’s mobile age, many drivers are engaging in unsafe smartphone activities behind the wheel, including texting, emailing, and posting on social media,” said Principal Rob Bach. “The *It Can Wait* simulator is a great way for students to experience firsthand in a safe setting how dangerous and potentially deadly this behavior can be. We want our students at SAHS to be safe, and we encourage them to take the pledge to put their phones down while they are driving.”

The *It Can Wait* simulator is visiting Stillwater Area 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*](#)[®] 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.

“Even though it’s against the law, we still see too many drivers texting or emailing on their phones when they shouldn’t be,” said State Senator Karin Housley. “Through the *It Can Wait* campaign, we can raise awareness among our youngest drivers about the dangers of texting while driving, as well as other smartphone activity behind the wheel.”

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.

“It is important that drivers realize that not only is texting and driving a dangerous mix, but so is other smartphone activity behind the wheel,” said State Representative Kathy Lohmer. “We hope today’s presentation will encourage Stillwater students to take the pledge to focus on the important task of driving instead of their phones.”

AT&T first launched the *It Can Wait*[®] 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.

The *It Can Wait* campaign has inspired over 8 million pledges not to text and drive across the country. Visit 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.

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