

Distracted Truck Drivers Put Georgia Families at Risk

How Distraction Behind the Wheel Leads to Devastating Truck Accidents

Every day on Georgia's highways, tractor-trailers stretch for miles, carrying everything from household goods to hazardous materials. These vehicles are a critical part of our economy, but when a truck driver is distracted, they become a moving threat to everyone on the road.

At the [Law Offices of Gary Martin Hays & Associates, P.C.](#), we've seen the aftermath of distracted truck driving up close. From multi-vehicle crashes on I-285 to fatal rear-end collisions on rural state routes, these accidents often stem from split-second decisions with life-altering consequences. For victims and families, the pain is permanent. But behind the tragedy, there is often a clear cause, and that's where accountability begins.

Distracted Driving Is a Growing Problem Among Commercial Drivers

Distracted driving is dangerous in any context, but the risk multiplies when the driver is operating an 80,000-pound truck. Federal regulations require commercial drivers to maintain full attention while driving, but many still engage in risky behaviors behind the wheel.

According to the [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration \(FMCSA\)](#), distracted driving is one of the leading causes of large truck crashes in the United States. In recent years, distraction was cited in more than 11 percent of all truck crashes involving fatalities. But those are just the incidents we know about. Distraction is notoriously underreported, especially when it can't be confirmed through video or eyewitness accounts.

The pressure on truck drivers to meet tight delivery deadlines, navigate unfamiliar roads, and stay constantly connected with dispatch can all contribute to distraction. But none of these challenges excuses negligent behavior when lives are at stake.

Common Forms of Truck Driver Distraction

Not all distractions are the same. Some are visual, others are cognitive or manual. Each creates a dangerous delay in reaction time, and at highway speeds, even a one-second lapse can mean the difference between a near miss and a devastating [truck accident](#).

Here are some of the most common types of distractions that cause truck accidents in Georgia:

Texting or Using a Phone While Driving

Despite federal bans on texting and handheld phone use for commercial drivers, many still check messages, make calls, or even scroll through social media while operating a rig. The [FMCSA](#) has stated that texting while driving increases the likelihood of a crash or near-crash by 23 times.

Eating or Drinking Behind the Wheel

Truckers often drive for long hours without breaks, leading some to eat meals while moving. Taking hands off the wheel and eyes off the road to unwrap food or open a drink is a form of distraction that often goes unnoticed—until it causes a wreck.

Reaching for Objects or Adjusting Controls

Fiddling with a GPS device, CB radio, or climate controls can create a lapse in attention. In some serious cases, truckers have admitted to leaning over to grab something from the passenger seat when a crash occurred.

Daydreaming or Cognitive Distraction

Long hours on the road can lead to mental fatigue and a tendency to zone out. This type of distraction doesn't require a phone or external trigger, just a wandering mind. However, it's one of the most dangerous because it's invisible and hard to prove.

Distractions Caused by In-Cab Technology

Modern trucks are often equipped with sophisticated telematics systems, digital logs, and other tools meant to improve safety and compliance. But when poorly designed or misused, these systems can pull a driver's attention away from the road.

Distracted Truck Drivers Can Cause Real Tragedies on Georgia Roads

The statistics are staggering, but the real impact of distracted driving is felt by families who lose loved ones in preventable crashes.

Consider these potential scenarios:

- A truck driver [rear-ends a family vehicle](#) while looking at a dispatch message, resulting in permanent spinal injuries for a child in the back seat.
- A distracted trucker veers across the centerline on a two-lane highway, killing a motorcyclist who had no chance to react.
- A long-haul driver eating lunch behind the wheel on I-75 who failed to notice stopped traffic ahead and caused a [deadly chain-reaction crash](#).

Trucking Companies Share Responsibility for Distracted Driving

It's not always just the driver at fault. In many cases, the trucking company creates conditions that make distraction more likely.

For example:

- **Failure to Train:** If a company fails to train drivers on federal mobile device laws or how to use in-cab systems safely, it may be held liable for negligent training.
- **Unrealistic Schedules:** Pressuring drivers to meet unreasonable delivery windows can lead them to multitask behind the wheel or skip rest breaks.

- **Lack of Oversight:** Some companies fail to monitor driver behavior through telematics, even when they have the tools to flag distracted driving.
- **Ignoring Prior Incidents:** A history of distracted driving citations or near misses should raise red flags. If a company [knowingly hires](#) or keeps a distracted driver on the road, that decision could have deadly consequences.

Truck accident litigation often uncovers shocking [evidence](#), such as dispatch messages sent while the truck was in motion, ignored dashcam warnings, or a lack of disciplinary action after repeated safety violations. That's why a thorough investigation is critical.

Investigating Distracted Truck Driving Requires Legal Skill and Resources

Proving that a truck driver was distracted can be difficult. Unlike [drunk driving](#), there's often no clear test or obvious signal. But experienced truck accident lawyers know where to look.

At Gary Martin Hays & Associates, we often take the following steps in distracted driving cases:

- **Obtain Cell Phone Records:** Text and call logs can reveal if the driver was using a phone at the time of the crash.
- **Secure In-Cab Video:** Many trucks are equipped with dashcams or cabin-facing cameras. These can provide direct evidence of distraction.
- **Review Black Box Data:** Electronic logging devices (ELDs) and engine control modules can show sudden braking, erratic driving, or moments of inattention.
- **Interview Witnesses:** Passengers, other motorists, or even other truckers on the CB can help confirm distracted behavior.
- **Depose Company Representatives:** Dispatch logs and internal communications often reveal pressure from above that contributed to unsafe driving.

This level of investigation requires legal knowledge, resources, and a relentless pursuit of the truth. Victims deserve nothing less.

How Georgia Law Addresses Distracted Truck Driving

[Georgia law](#) prohibits all drivers from holding or using a mobile device while driving, and federal law bans commercial drivers from using handheld phones or texting altogether. Violations can lead to fines, license suspensions, and—in crash cases—civil liability.

However, trucking companies and [their insurers](#) often try to downplay distraction as “driver error” or shift blame onto the injured party. That's why it's important to have a Georgia truck accident lawyer who understands how these cases are built and won.

In serious crashes, we pursue full compensation for:

- Medical bills, surgeries, and future care
- Lost income and reduced earning capacity

- Pain and suffering, both physical and emotional
- Loss of consortium or wrongful death damages for families
- [Punitive damages](#) in cases of gross negligence

When a distracted driver puts your life at risk, you have the right to demand justice. We're here to fight for you every step of the way.

Don't Let a Distracted Driver's Negligence Destroy Your Future

The consequences of a distracted truck driver's actions are often permanent. Whether you've suffered a life-changing injury or lost someone you love, the road to recovery can be long and overwhelming. But you don't have to walk it alone.

At Gary Martin Hays & Associates, we focus on uncovering the truth, building strong cases, and helping Georgia families rebuild after tragedy. We know what's at stake. And we know how to win.

If you were injured in a crash involving a distracted truck driver, let's talk. Your consultation is free, and if we take your case, [you don't pay unless we win](#).