

Green Flag helps motorists solve the mobile mystery

As the government launches a radio advertising campaign this week pending new laws banning the use of hand held mobile phones while driving, Green Flag Motoring Assistance advises motorists what is and isn't acceptable under the new rules, in a bid to eliminate confusion and promote safer driving.

([PRWEB](#)) November 23, 2003 -- From December 1, anyone caught using a hand held mobile phone while driving will face a fixed penalty of £30 or, if convicted in court, a fine of up to £1,000 plus three points on their driving licence. The only exception will be making 999 emergency calls, where it is unsafe to stop to make the call. Hands free kits will be allowed under the new legislation, however the police will stop motorists who are using hands free kits if it appears they are driving without due care and attention.

Figures from the Department for Transport show that four out of five motorists either own or have access to a mobile phone, highlighting how potentially widespread mobile phone use behind the wheel is.

Green Flag spokesman Nigel Charlesworth commented: "It is essential that motorists are up to date about the new laws, not only to avoid prosecution, but also for the safety of themselves and other road users. It can be tempting to answer a call when driving, but the distraction is not worth the risk, and ignorance will be no defence for those caught using a hand held mobile from December 1."

While mobile phones on the move can offer benefits, such as the ability to call for assistance in the event of a breakdown, Green Flag is issuing the following advice to motorists to promote safe mobile phone use:

- Keep your phone on voicemail when driving
- If you need to make a call, or check your messages, stop and park up in a safe place and switch off your engine first.
- If you feel you really must make or receive phone calls, stick to using a hands free kit with a cradle, and keep conversation brief
- Tell the person calling you that you are driving so they understand your need to concentrate

Avoid long complex conversations. Instead tell the person you will call back when you have parked up safely.

- Remember it is an offence for employers to encourage motorists to use their mobile phones when driving, so do not feel obliged to answer or make work-related phone calls while driving.
- Never stop on the hard shoulder of the motorway to use a mobile phone unless it is an emergency.
- In the case of an emergency it is better to use the roadside emergency phones situated along the hard shoulder if possible, as this will make it easier to trace your location and reach you quickly.
- If you are an employer and your staff drive for work purposes, you will need to review your risk management procedures to include policy on mobile phone use which reflects the new laws.

Notes to editors:

- Further information on new mobile phone legislation can be found on the following websites:
www.brake.org.uk
www.DfT.gov.uk
www.rospa.com
www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk



- Green Flag Motoring Assistance provides roadside rescue and recovery to almost 5m customers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Green Flag's incident management centre in Leeds handles around 1m calls each year.
- On average Green Flag reaches customers within 39 minutes (based on 213,000 customer questionnaires undertaken from July 2002 to June 2003).
- Customers have access to a national network of independent recovery agents and 6,000 qualified technicians.
- More than 90 per cent get assistance within the hour.
- Green Flag Motoring Assistance insurance products are underwritten by UK Insurance Ltd, a member of the General Insurance Standards Council.

Press Calls

For further information and photography contact Nigel Charlesworth or Melanie Denny at Green Flag on 0113 399 1427/1387 (out of hours 07711 964 615).

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