

As states initiate more and more strict legislation of cell phone use, the greater public seems to find ever more foolish things to do with their devices.

From text messaging while driving to blatant disregard of safety warnings, one conclusion seems inescapable: cell phones are indeed, dangerous tools.

Only “other people” do idiotic things, not rational people like us. Only the most foolhardy and irresponsible members of society would take their eyes off the road and their hands off the wheel while driving to read and text on their mobile phones.

After all, when operating a roughly one ton machine at speeds regularly in excess of 20 mph, “we” would never allow ourselves to flaunt the laws of common sense.

Unfortunately, we have all been guilty at some point of ignoring the fundamentals of common sense because we do not believe bad things can happen to us.

Something as simple as reaching for an open soft drink container can perilously divert our attention from the road; therefore, an engaging conversation about a legal brief, a homework assignment, even a particularly juicy piece of gossip can be just as deadly.

We can safely assume that the with the exception of getting directions to a particular destination, few if any conversations are about the road conditions around us.

Cell phones are a dangerous distraction.

Putting aside abuses of common sense, the question of public health must be addressed as well; cell phone users risk exposure to potentially harmful doses of microwave radiation.

The federal government does issue maximum allowances for cellular phones' microwave emissions, and current models stay well within those regulations.

Still, cell phone manufacturers and communication experts alike recommend using wired ear-buds rather than holding the

devices against the head for prolonged periods of time because---let's face it---radiation is radiation.

If you hold a minimally shielded microwave emitting device against your head (in other words, if you use a cell phone like a normal person) you risk your future health.

The most popular alternative to speaking directly into the phone is not much better.

Even the Bluetooth capable headsets do, by design, transmit and receive a signal.

If we grant that a cellular devices' microwave transmission may be potentially harmful to the outside of our heads, then it does not follow that we should instead put it inside our ears.

Whether it is because of handheld use while driving or ignorance of the dangers of unshielded radiation, the federal government is absolutely in the right to regulate cell phone use in public.

It is a fact that cell phones have saturated society to the point where even elementary school children regularly use them---they are simply too entrenched in daily life to ban outright; however, efforts must be enacted to control their public use to protect society against the reckless, and to protect society's health against a poorly recognized danger.