



PRESS RELEASE | British Columbia

Methodology:

Results are based on an online study conducted from December 14 to December 16, 2020, among 800 adults in British Columbia. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in British Columbia. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.5 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

All things considered, do you support or oppose each one of these penalties for drivers caught emailing, texting, or using an electronic device in British Columbia?

Suspending the driver for one year

Support – 54%
Oppose – 37%
Not sure – 9%

Doubling the current first-time fine to \$1,240

Support – 59%
Oppose – 32%
Not sure – 8%

Seizing the electronic devices of repeat offenders

Support – 70%
Oppose – 24%
Not sure – 6%

British Columbians Endorse Tougher Penalties for Distracted Driving

Seven-in-ten residents of the province agree with seizing the electronic devices of repeat offenders.

Vancouver, BC [December 25, 2020] – A large proportion of residents of British Columbia report seeing distracted drivers on the road, and sizeable majorities are supportive of implementing new measures to curb the illegal practice, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative provincial sample, more than half of British Columbians (55%) say they witnessed a driver talking on a hand-held cell phone or texting while driving over the past month.

Residents of Southern BC (64%) and Vancouver Island (also 64%) are more likely to have recently seen a driver texting or chatting on a cell phone, compared to 61% in both Northern BC and the Fraser Valley and 49% in Metro Vancouver.

Drivers caught emailing, texting, or using an electronic device while driving in British Columbia face a fine of \$368 and four penalty points (equivalent to \$252) in their insurance penalty point premium. This means a total of \$620 for a first-time infraction.

Just over half of British Columbians (52%) believe the current fine for distracted driving is “about right”, while 30% consider it “too low” and 14% deem it “too high.”

Only 18% of British Columbians aged 18-to-34 believe the current fine for distracted driving in British Columbia is “too low”, compared to 29% among those aged 35-to-54 and 38% among those aged 55 and over.

When asked about other possible penalties for drivers caught emailing, texting, or using an electronic device in British Columbia, more than half of residents (54%) agree with suspending the driver for one year.

Support is higher for two other penalties: doubling the current fine to \$1,240 (59%) and seizing the electronic devices of repeat offenders (70%).

“British Columbians who voted for each of the province’s major parties in the last election are in favour of tougher legislation to curtail distracted driving,” says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. “While 50% of BC Liberal voters endorse doubling the current fine, the proportion rises to 57% among those who



voted for the BC New Democratic Party (NDP) and 66% among those who cast ballots for BC Green Party candidates."

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About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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Media contact:

Mario Canseco, President, Research Co.
[c] 778.929.0490
[e] mario.canseco@researchco.ca

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mario.canseco@researchco.ca



mario_canseco



778.929.0490



Mario Canseco