

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DRIVE SMART VIRGINIA AND CASEY MEARS PROMOTING DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH

Mooresville, NC (April 3, 2013) – The month of April is underway and it serves as Distracted Driving Awareness Month. For the second straight year, DRIVE SMART Virginia, GEICO and Germain Racing will partner to bring attention to one of our nation’s biggest hazards, distracted driving. Casey Mears will carry the DRIVE SMART Virginia logo on his #13 GEICO Ford Fusion for the Martinsville and Richmond NASCAR Sprint Cup Series races on April 7th and April 27th.

Mears and his GEICO team will help deliver the message that ‘driving distractions can be deadly... buckle up, phone down’.

Janet Brooking, Executive Director, DRIVE SMART Virginia said, “We’re excited about the partnership with Casey Mears, GEICO and Germain Racing. Casey understands that no matter how well you drive, distracted driving is dangerous at any speed. Any time your hands are off the wheel or your eyes are off the road, you could injure yourself or others in a crash. We’re glad Casey shares our passion and we hope that together we can convey the importance of our message.”

More than a racecar driver, Mears is a husband and the father of a young family. He strongly adheres to the principle of ‘buckle up, phone down’, and encourages others to do so, as well.

“I enjoy the partnership with DRIVE SMART Virginia because it allows me to help spread their message about the dangers of distracted driving and the importance of being focused when you’re behind the wheel,” Mears said. “A text, or checking Facebook or Twitter, is not worth losing your life over. If you have someone with you, have them text for you; a designated texter, if you will. What’s important is arriving safely at your destination. If you text and drive, you not only run the risk of hurting yourself, but also others around you, just check the statistics. I appreciate GEICO and DRIVE SMART Virginia giving me this opportunity to positively impact the lives of others.”

Some key facts surrounding distracted driving:

- If you text and drive you are 23 times more likely to have a crash.
- 8 out of 10 crashes involve a distracted driving incident within 3 seconds of the incident.
- Talking on a phone, even hands free, reduces the brain activity associated with driving nearly 40%.
- In 2011, 3,331 people were killed and 387,000 injured nationally in distracted driving crashes.
- Wear your seatbelt: it’s the best defense against a distracted driver.

DRIVE SMART Virginia’s mission is to educate drivers and raise traffic safety awareness in order to save lives and reduce injuries on the roadways of Virginia.

As part of Distracted Driving Awareness Month, DRIVE SMART Virginia has planned events from Bristol to Virginia Beach and from Martinsville to Northern Virginia. Many workplace partners are planning a distracted driving day at their offices, including a letter from an executive to employees about distracted driving. Some schools will distribute posters and brochures.

To learn more about DRIVE SMART Virginia, please visit: www.drivesmartva.org

To learn more about the GEICO Racing program, please visit: www.caseymearsracing.com

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