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Become a safe driver, not a statistic.

Every year, more than six million car accidents occur in the United States, resulting in approximately 40,000 deaths – that’s one every 12 minutes. And considering that North Texans spend more time on the road commuting than anywhere else in the country, NTTA believes that proper driving safety is a top priority. This special edition e-newsletter is dedicated to special tips and preventive techniques that will help ensure that you don’t become part of the statistics.



Don't Text and Drive!

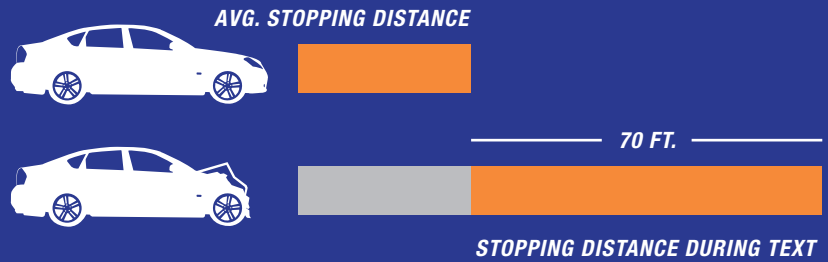
Texting while driving is dangerous. Sending or reading texts while driving significantly slows reaction time and has been linked to many serious, and even fatal, accidents. The danger is so significant that a number of organizations are working to spread the word. A study completed by the American Automobile Association showed that nearly 50 percent of teen drivers admit to texting while driving.



As part of the NTTA's Safe-T Buzz campaign, the NTTA sponsors the "iPromise not 2 txt & drive" campaign created by the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council. The campaign strives to raise awareness about the dangers of texting and driving. The year-round "iPromise not 2 txt & drive" campaign asks drivers to promise a close friend or loved one that they will not text and drive. The friends or loved ones are then asked to make the same promise. The NTTA asks you to participate in the campaign by not texting and driving.

Driving Reaction Time

An alert driver takes approximately half a second to react after seeing a light turn red. Reaction times more than double while reading or typing a text message. On a straight course with no obstacles, drivers who were texting at highway speeds took up to 70 more feet to stop the car than alert drivers.



For more information, visit www.ncttrac.org.

Don't Be A Wrong-Way Driver!

Every year, hundreds of people are killed when driving the wrong way down a busy street. The NTTA is heading in the right direction by taking precautionary measures to prevent wrong-way drivers on its roadways and save lives. Numerous system enhancements have been implemented to address incidents concerning under-the-influence drivers. Plus, even more ideas are being developed for the future.

Reflective Pavement Markers and Signposts

The NTTA added raised pavement markings, wrong-way arrow detail and signpost reflective tape to catch the attention of wrong-way drivers. Studies showed that intoxicated drivers tend to look downward for visual cues. The reflective tape and the pavement markings should draw their eyes up before they enter the road heading in the wrong direction.



LED-Enhanced “Wrong Way” Signs



Six LED signs are on the south end of the Dallas North Tollway at Harry Hines and at the two northbound exit ramps to U.S. 380 and Cotton Gin in Frisco. The flashing signs warn drivers if they are headed in the wrong direction.

Median Modification at Wycliff Avenue



The median enhancements at the end of the Dallas North Tollway southbound exit at Wycliff Avenue elongate two medians, which makes it difficult – if not impossible – for motorists to enter going the wrong way at Wycliff Avenue.

Detection System and Notification Software

Sensors embedded in the pavement detect the number of axles on a vehicle and when a vehicle is traveling in the wrong direction. The new technology sends audible and visual alerts to the NTTA's Command Center when a sensor detects a motorist going the wrong way.

Safe Driving Practices

Following Distance



Drive at least four seconds behind the vehicle in front of you. This allows you time and space to avoid a potential collision if the vehicle ahead of you makes any sudden or erratic movements.



NTTA
Safe T Buzz



Miles is the mascot for
NTTA's SafeT Buzz program.

Avoid Aggressive Drivers

Driving in the lane of least resistance, usually the center lane, is a safe option while traveling from point A to point B. Motorists who are prone to aggressive driving usually drive in the left lane, which typically moves at faster speeds.

Sharing the Road with Big Rigs

» Blind Spots

Many motorists falsely assume that truckers can see the road better because they sit twice as high as the driver of a car. While truckers do enjoy a better forward view and have bigger mirrors, they also have large blind spots. Unlike cars, trucks have deep blind spots behind them and much larger blind spots on both sides than passenger vehicles. Lingering in these blind spots increases the chances of a crash. An excellent rule for motorists sharing the road with trucks is, "If you can't see the truck driver in the side mirror, he can't see you either."



» Turning

When following a tractor-trailer, observe its turn signals before trying to pass. If it appears to be starting a left turn, wait a moment to check and see which way the driver is signaling to turn before passing on the right. Trucks need to swing wide to the left in order to safely negotiate a right turn. They cannot see cars directly behind or beside them. Cutting in between the commercial vehicle and the curb or shoulder to the right could result in an accident.

» Stopping

Tractor-trailers are not as maneuverable as cars. They have longer accelerating and stopping distances, make wider turns, and they weigh more than any other vehicle on the road. Tractor-trailers take longer to stop than a car traveling at the same speed. The average passenger car traveling at 55 miles per hour usually can stop in 150 to 160 feet. A fully loaded truck traveling at the same speed may take more than a football field's length to come to a complete stop.

Slow Down – It's a Work Zone!

When approaching a work zone, slow down and pay extra attention to signs and message boards alerting of changing routes or conditions. Also, be alert to other drivers who may not be paying attention. And remember, Texas enforces increased penalties for drivers who ignore posted speed limits in work zones where workers are present. A traffic ticket will cost more when workers are in the area.

Work Zone Travel Tips

Eliminate Distractions

Drinking, eating, using a cell phone or adjusting radio settings all take attention away from the road long enough for serious mistakes to occur.

Expect the Unexpected

Speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be changed, and people may be working on or near the road.

Slow Down

A car traveling at 60 mph travels 88 feet per second. The faster you are driving, the longer it takes to stop.

Read Caution Signs

Don't assume that the same road conditions are in effect as the last time you traveled through that work zone. Construction schedules call for frequent changes.

Give Yourself Room

Rear-end collisions are the most common type of accident in work zones.

Plan Ahead

Leave early or map out an alternate route so you don't feel pressured to speed.

Be Patient

If you don't see workers, that doesn't mean they aren't there.

What to Do in an Auto Accident

Most crashes on Texas roads result from speeding, failure to yield, driving under the influence of alcohol, following too closely and running red lights and stop signs. Take the following steps when you are involved in an auto accident:

- » *Check for injuries. If people are hurt, tend to them if possible.*
- » *If able, move your car out of the roadway to a safer place where you can exchange names, addresses, phone numbers, vehicle identification numbers, vehicle license plate numbers, insurance information and driver license information.*
- » *Note the location of the crash and get the names, addresses and phone numbers of any witnesses. If the vehicles cannot be moved, protect the scene by turning on emergency flashers, setting up flares or raising your hood.*

Always call the police or the NTTA's Command Center when an injury or fatality is involved, the vehicles cannot be moved, you suspect one of the drivers is intoxicated, one of the drivers has no insurance, or one of the drivers leaves the scene. The Command Center and emergency numbers are conveniently located on the inside of your window-mounted TollTag facing the inside of the vehicle.

NTTA's Technology for Your Safety

The NTTA has implemented Intelligent Transportation Systems to promote and facilitate clear roadways and provide timely dissemination of traveler information to customers. ITS utilizes advanced technology such as closed circuit television cameras, automated incident detection systems, dynamic message signs, travel time sensors, the NTTA's website, and road weather

information systems sensors to improve roadway efficiency, safety and mobility. These systems are used 24/7 to monitor and manage traffic and roadway operations, detect incidents, manage the response to those incidents, and to keep customers informed of situations which may impact their travel.

To Stay Safe, Follow These Tips:

- » *Decrease your speed and leave yourself plenty of room to stop. Allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.*
- » *Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.*
- » *Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.*
- » *Keep your lights and windshield clean.*
- » *Use lower gears to keep traction, especially on hills.*
- » *Never use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads.*
- » *Be especially careful on bridges and overpasses, which will freeze first.*
- » *Do not pass sanding trucks. The drivers have limited visibility, and you're likely to find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.*
- » *Don't assume your vehicle can handle all conditions. Even four-wheel and front-wheel drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.*

NTTA notifies drivers of traffic conditions and lane closures on its website www.NTTA.org or through its information hotline 214-224-3030.



What You Need to Know About Air Bags

According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration studies, vehicle air bags save thousands of lives each year. However, they must be used properly to be effective rather than destructive.

While they save lives, air bags are but one of many important vehicle safety systems; it is critical that occupants always properly wear their safety belts. Other reminders:

- » *Drivers should sit with at least 10 inches between the center of their breastbone and the center of the steering wheel.*
- » *Air bags deploy only once.*
- » *Safety belts help restrain occupants during the initial collision and any following, if the vehicle strikes more than one object.*
- » *Safety belts help keep front seat occupants in position to maximize an air bag's effectiveness.*
- » *Very close or direct contact with an air bag module during deployment can cause serious or even fatal injury. Front air bags are designed to deploy only in moderate to severe frontal or near-frontal collisions, and do not reduce the risk of injury in rear, side or rollover crashes. Safety belts help reduce injury risk in many types of crashes.*

Child Car Safety

Motor vehicle crashes in the United States are the leading cause of death for children ages three and older. One of the most important precautions parents and caregivers can take to protect their children while they are in a car is to properly install and use child safety seats. For effectiveness, seats must be appropriate for the child's size and age.

- » *Children 12 and under are safest when properly restrained in a rear seat, whether the vehicle has an air bag or not.*
- » *Infants should travel in rear-facing restraints until they reach 20 pounds and are at least one year old. Never put a rear-facing infant restraint in the front seat of a vehicle with a front passenger air bag.*



How to Spot a Drunk Driver

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration provides the following clues to help identify nighttime drunk drivers. If you see a driver you suspect may be drunk, stay a safe distance behind the vehicle and call 9-1-1.



- » *Turning with a wide radius*
- » *Straddling the center of the road or lane marker*
- » *Almost striking an object or other vehicle*
- » *Weaving or zigzagging across the road*
- » *Driving on areas other than a designated roadway*
- » *Turning abruptly or illegally*
- » *Driving slower than 10 mph below speed limit*
- » *Stopping without cause in a traffic lane*
- » *Following others too closely*
- » *Drifting or moving in a straight line at a slight angle to the roadway*
- » *Erratic braking*
- » *Signaling that is inconsistent with driving actions*
- » *Slow response to traffic signals (sudden stop, delayed start)*
- » *Driving with headlights off*

For more information about driving and roadway safety, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at www.nhtsa.gov.



QUESTIONS ABOUT SAFETY

Customers with concerns or questions about safety can contact the NTTA at www.NTTA.org or safety@ntta.org.

ROADWAY CUSTOMER SERVICE

If you find yourself stranded or in need of help on an NTTA roadway, the NTTA's Roadway Customer Service and Command Center teams are always on duty to help motorists at no charge. To get help from Roadway Customer Service or in the event of an emergency, call 9-1-1 or the NTTA Command Center at **972.444.HELP (4357)**.



The MISSION of the North Texas Tollway Authority is to enhance mobility through responsible and innovative tolling solutions.

NTTA
NORTH TEXAS TOLLWAY AUTHORITY

www.NTTA.org
972.818.NTTA (6882)