



NEWS RELEASE

MediaRelations@txdot.gov
512-463-8700



IMPAIRED DRIVING CAMPAIGN AIMS TO SAVE AT-RISK HISPANIC MALES, REDUCE OVERALL CRASHES

Bilingual campaign tours state to raise awareness among young drivers

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AUSTIN – Impaired driving continues to be a significant problem in Texas and responding to this challenge requires an effective plan to communicate with all Texans. In 2014, young Hispanic males comprised 49 percent of all statewide male drivers, ages 17-34, involved in impaired driving crashes. These crashes led to 605 serious injuries and 275 deaths, leaving families facing a lifetime of loss. In an effort to reduce crashes and save lives, the Texas Department of Transportation today is launching a bilingual, DUI awareness campaign called “Drink. Drive. Go to Jail. De Veras.”

“Unfortunately, drinking and driving remains a serious problem in Texas,” said TxDOT Executive Director LtGen Joe Weber, USMC (Ret). “Until that changes, we must be diligent in our efforts to save lives, reduce crashes and spare families the heartache of losing loved ones to irresponsible decision making. The loss and suffering that comes with drinking and driving is entirely preventable. Don’t do it. Period.”

The “Drink. Drive. Go to Jail. De Veras.” campaign runs through May 23 to overlap with Easter, Fiesta and Cinco de Mayo. The Spanish phrase “De Veras,” meaning “For Real,” is a common expression used by Spanish speakers when responding to expressions of disbelief. Recent census numbers show that 38 percent of the Texas population is Hispanic. This number is expected to grow significantly in the coming decades along with the state’s overall population.

Recognizing the importance of this campaign, the Association of Hispanic Municipal Officials and the Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce are joining TxDOT as partners.

“As an organization that cares deeply about the welfare of the Hispanic community, we support this effort and its focus to save the lives of our young Hispanic drivers,” said San Marcos Mayor Daniel Guerrero, President of the Association of Hispanic Municipal Officials. “Our young drivers need to be educated on the fact that one wrong decision can have dire ramifications on their future. This campaign, with its cultural influence, will resonate strongly in the Hispanic community.”

Pauline Anton, Executive Director of the Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce said, “It is critical that we work together to make everyone aware of the dangers involved when they drink and drive — hefty fines, jail time or worse, the loss of a life. We are proud to support this campaign for a second year in the continued hope of seeing more lives saved in our community.”

The “Drink. Drive. Go to Jail. De Veras.” campaign features an interactive truck with graphics inspired by Lotería, a traditional, bingo-like game from Mexico. A street team accompanying the truck will invite audiences to play DWI Lotería, which uses customized game cards to discourage drinking and driving.

Lively music and prizes will be a part of the game experience. The DWI Lotería truck will make appearances at the following community events:

- Pasadena: Certified Neck Breakers Custom Car & Truck Show – April 12
- Laredo: Brown Impressions Low Rider Car Show – April 26
- San Antonio: Los Magnificos Car Show – May 3
- Austin: Pachanga Latino Music Festival – May 16
- Victoria: Memorial Weekend Bash – May 23

For more information, contact TxDOT Media Relations at MediaRelations@txdot.gov or (512) 463-8700.

The information contained in this report represents reportable data collected from the Texas Peace Officer's Crash Report (CR-3). This information was received and processed by the department as of February 27, 2015.

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The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, rail, and public transportation across the state. TxDOT and its 12,000 employees are committed to working with others to provide safe and reliable transportation solutions for Texas by maintaining a safe system, addressing congestion, connecting Texas communities, and being a Best in Class state agency. Find out more at [txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov). "Like" us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/txdot) and follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/txdot).

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