



**Texas Department of Transportation**

**news**

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TxDOT's six goals: Prepare for the future; Enhance safety; Maintain the transportation system; Relieve congestion; Enhance connectivity; Work with our partners to identify funding strategies

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## **TxDOT Urges Texans to “Buckle Them Right” During Child Passenger Safety Week - Sept. 18-24**

*Free hands-on child safety seat inspections held across the state during the week and on “National Seat Check Saturday”*

**[Austin, Sept. 13 2011]** – According to figures from the National Center for Health Statistics, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children 14 years old and younger. The National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that roughly 3 out of 4 child safety seats are not used correctly.

Correctly installed child safety seats and booster seats save lives – offering the best protection for children in the event of a crash. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), along with SafeKids, will be offering free safety seat check-ups and advice throughout Texas during Child Passenger Safety Week, Sept. 18 - 24.

“When it comes to the safety of your children, there is no room for mistake. Child restraint seats can be complicated to install and use correctly. We want to make sure Texas families are buckling their children up right,” said Carol T. Rawson, P.E., Traffic Operation Director for the Texas Department of Transportation. “We want to encourage adults to read the child safety seat manufacturer’s instructions, in addition to the vehicle manual on installation, in order to protect our smallest Texans.”

On Saturday, Sept. 24, TxDOT and SafeKids certified technicians will offer free hands-on child safety seat inspections and advice at locations across the state to help Texas families learn to secure their children in the appropriate child safety seat, booster seats and seat belts. More information on how to properly secure children and where to find a child safety seat check point is available at [www.bucklethemright.org](http://www.bucklethemright.org).

A 2011 study conducted by the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) in 14 cities across the state found that 10.5 percent of observed children were riding unrestrained. The same study found that nearly one third of children observed in child safety seats were restrained in an unsafe manner.

The Texas Child Restraint Law was changed in 2009, requiring all children younger than 8 years old, unless taller than 4 feet 9 inches, to be in child restraint seats or booster seats in the car. Fines of up to \$25 for a first offense and \$250 for a second offense may be issued for noncompliance.

Visit [www.bucklethemright.org](http://www.bucklethemright.org) to learn more about the **4 Steps for Kids** guidelines for determining which restraint system is best suited to protect children based on their age and size, and where to find a child safety seat check point. The website also features video demonstrations on installing child safety seats and crash test simulations, where parents and caregivers can see firsthand the effects of improper child

restraint. For more information, you can visit the NHTSA site at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/CPS> or SafeRiders at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/saferiders/>.

**The Texas Department of Transportation**

The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining nearly 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, rail and public transportation across the state. TxDOT and its approximately 12,000 employees strive to empower local leaders to solve local transportation problems, and to use new financial tools, including tolling and public-private partnerships, to reduce congestion and pave the way for future economic growth while enhancing safety, improving air quality and preserving the value of the state's transportation assets. Find out more at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov). Fan us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/txdot](http://www.facebook.com/txdot). Follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/txdot](http://www.twitter.com/txdot).

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