
TxDOT's four goals: Maintain a safe system, address congestion, connect Texas communities, and be a Best-in-Class state agency

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AS BACK-TO-SCHOOL TRAFFIC RESUMES, TxDOT REMINDS MOTORISTS TO 'DRIVE FRIENDLY. DRIVE SAFE.' ALL YEAR LONG

Crashes involving pedestrians, bicyclists on the rise in Texas

AUSTIN — Back-to-school means back-to-traffic, and as students return to the classroom this fall, the Texas Department of Transportation calls on drivers to “Drive Friendly. Drive Safe.” to reduce crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists.

In 2012, vehicles on Texas roads struck more than 5,000 pedestrians resulting in 2,962 serious injuries and 481 fatalities. Vehicles also struck more than 2,000 bicyclists resulting in 1,450 serious injuries and 56 fatalities. Compared with the previous year, 2012 saw a 13.2 percent increase in pedestrian fatalities and a 19.1 percent increase in bicyclist fatalities.

“When you drive friendly and drive safe, you’re doing your part to help save lives,” said Phil Wilson, TxDOT executive director. “Being responsible behind the wheel is especially important in and around school zones, and other areas where vulnerable pedestrians and bicyclists interact with vehicles.”

Equally concerning are nationwide crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists. On average, one pedestrian is killed in a vehicle crash every 119 minutes, and one injured every eight minutes. Additionally in 2011, 677 bicyclists were killed in nationwide vehicle crashes and 48,000 were injured.

To help drivers “Drive Friendly. Drive Safe.” this back-to-school season and year-round, TxDOT offers the following tips:

- Pay attention – put your phone down.
- Obey posted speed limits.
- Be on the lookout for bicyclists on the highway and at intersections.
- When passing a bicyclist, move to another lane if possible and offer plenty of room.
- Watch for bicyclists who may need to maneuver around potholes and debris.
- Be on the lookout for — and yield to — pedestrians, especially when approaching crosswalks, intersections and buses.
- Watch for children who may dart across the street to catch a school bus.
- Regardless of which direction you’re traveling, always stop for school buses with flashing red lights.

Drivers who fail to follow traffic laws are at risk of injuring or killing themselves or others, and being penalized with fines and possible jail time.

For more information, visit www.txdot.gov or visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TxDOT. For media inquiries, contact TxDOT Media Relations at MediaRelations@txdot.gov or (512) 463-8700.

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Texas Department of Transportation

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 11,000 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 www.txdot.gov. Fan us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/txdot; and follow us on Twitter, www.twitter.com/txdot.