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

## Drive Friendly. Drive Safe. Campaign – Media Messaging and Q&A

- **Crashes among vehicles are bad enough, but when they involve an unprotected cyclist or pedestrian, that person has little chance of escaping unharmed.**
  - So, as more pedestrians will be walking or cycling with the start of the school year, TxDOT is reminding drivers to “Drive Friendly. Drive Safe.”
- **Safety is TxDOT’s first priority.**
  - Pedestrians, school children and bicyclists are some of the most vulnerable people on the road, and from 2011 to 2012 we saw over a 13 percent increase in fatalities of pedestrians (13.2%) and over a 19 percent increase in fatalities for cyclists (19.1%).
  - The “Drive Friendly. Drive Safe.” campaign reminds Texas drivers that it’s their responsibility to look out for pedestrians and bicyclists at all times.
- **When it comes to school zones and school children, we cannot overstate the importance of drivers paying attention and obeying the laws.**
  - School children can be very unpredictable. They’re easily distracted and can often run into traffic or out from behind parked cars.
  - As adults and licensed drivers, it’s imperative that motorists look out for children rather than expecting them to look out for us.

## Q & As

### Why are you focusing on pedestrian and bicycle safety now?

- Back-to-school means back-to-traffic, and from 2011 to 2012, we saw over a 13 percent increase in fatalities of pedestrians (13.2%) and over a 19 percent increase in fatalities for cyclists (19.1%).
- Safety is our top priority, so this back-to-school season we’re launching the “Drive Friendly. Drive Safe.” campaign to remind Texas drivers that it’s their responsibility to pay attention and watch for pedestrians and bicyclists at all times.

- Ultimately, everyone is responsible for helping us make Texas roads safer.

### **What are you doing to get the word out about this problem?**

- We've launched a statewide public education campaign that includes billboards, TV and print ads reminding drivers to "Drive Friendly. Drive Safe."
- The campaign focuses on generating awareness among drivers to remain alert and watch for pedestrians and bicyclists at all times.

### **Why is TxDOT focusing on driver awareness and not the awareness of pedestrians and bicyclists?**

- "Drive Friendly. Drive Safe." focuses on drivers because they can have the greatest impact on others. No matter who is at fault in a crash, the pedestrian or cyclist is the most vulnerable and always sustains greater injuries.

### **What are some tips for bicyclists to stay safe on the roadways?**

As a bicyclist, you should obey all traffic laws, including the following:

- Stop at red lights and stop signs
- Pay attention to lane markers
- Ride near the curb, traveling in the same direction as traffic
- Use a light on the front and a red reflector or red light on the back of your bike while riding at night

Also, remember to:

- Wear a properly fitted helmet to reduce the chances of head injury and death. *(NOTE: Some cities and counties require cyclists to wear helmets. Contact local law enforcement for more information.)*
- Always check brakes and tires before riding.
- Make it easier for drivers to see you by wearing light colors or reflective clothing.

(Source: <http://www.txdot.gov/driver/share-road/bicycles.html>)

### **What are some tips for pedestrians to stay safe on the roadways?**

- When there is a sidewalk, use it! Most pedestrian traffic accidents happen when someone is walking in the roadway.
- Always cross at intersections. Look left, then right, then left again before proceeding.
- Look for traffic when stepping off a bus or from behind parked cars.
- As a passenger, get in or out of a car on the curb side of the street.
- Make eye contact with drivers before you cross the street.

(Source: <http://www.txdot.gov/driver/share-road/pedestrians.html>)

**How can I find out more about traffic safety issues?**

Visit our website, [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov), for more information, and check us out Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/TxDOT>.