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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 Tackles Game Day Drinking and Driving with Statewide Tour**

*“Know When to Pass” campaign raises awareness on football game day drinking and driving*

**[Austin, October 31, 2011]** – Football game days are among the heaviest days for alcohol consumption, according to a 2007 study by the University of Texas. In a state where football reigns, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is tackling this issue with their “Know When to Pass” campaign, which aims to increase awareness of the dangers of game day drinking and encourage fans to pass their keys to a sober driver when they plan to drink.

Game day drinking and driving, whether to celebrate a professional or college football game, is a very serious problem in Texas and across the nation. A New England Journal of Medicine study found that in Texas, 45 percent of those who drink at a football watching party report driving home. Also in Texas, alcohol is accounting for more and more of all motor vehicle traffic fatalities. In 2006, driving under the influence accounted for 26.5 percent of all motor vehicle traffic fatalities. In 2010, this number was up to 35.6 percent—a 9.1 percent increase in 5 years.

This football season, TxDOT’s “Know When to Pass” truck, which features a glassed-in living room depicting the typical football watching party, will be visiting football games across the state to remind fans that if drinking is in their playbook, they should pass their keys to a sober receiver.

“The ‘Know When to Pass’ truck aims to increase awareness of the very serious dangers of game day drinking and driving, while motivating Texans to pass their keys to a sober driver or pass on drinking altogether,” said Carol T. Rawson P.E., TxDOT Traffic Operations Director. “We want everyone to enjoy game day and to plan ahead and have a sober driver to drive home safely.”

The tour will make the following scheduled stops throughout the month of November:

- **Houston:** October 31–November 1
- **San Antonio:** November 2–3
- **Austin:** November 4–5 for University of Texas vs. Texas Tech (November 5)
- **Dallas:** November 8–9
- **Lubbock:** November 11–12 for Texas Tech vs. Oklahoma State (November 12)
- **El Paso:** November 14
- **Midland/Odessa:** November 16
- **College Station:** November 18–19 for Texas A&M vs. Kansas (November 19)
- **Rio Grande Valley:** November 21

- **Dallas:** November 23–24 for Dallas Cowboys vs. Miami Dolphins (November 24)
- **Tyler/Longview:** November 28

Fans can follow the “Know When to Pass” truck on its journey by liking the “Texans Know When to Pass” Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/KnowWhenToPass](http://www.facebook.com/KnowWhenToPass).

### **National Statistics**

- In 2009, nearly 11,000 people were killed in U.S. highway crashes involving alcohol, according to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) officials.
- College home football games are associated with a 13 percent increase in arrests for drunk driving, according to a 2009 University of Colorado Study, “*College Football Games and Crime*”.

### **Texas Statistics**

- In 2010, there were 25,045 DUI alcohol-related crashes in Texas that resulted in 1,075 deaths and 16,875 injuries. (Texas Department of Transportation)
- In 2010, 35.6 percent of the total traffic fatalities in Texas were caused by drivers under the influence of alcohol. (Texas Department of Transportation)
- In Texas, more alcohol related crashes occurred on Saturday than any other day of the week. (Texas Department of Transportation)

Texas is tackling this problem with a statewide awareness initiative aimed at reducing the incidences of game day drinking and driving. TxDOT wants to encourage fans to enjoy the big games, but to be responsible when it comes to game day drinking and know when to pass. Always designate a sober driver if you plan on drinking, and if you are impaired, do not drive – call a taxi, use mass transit, contact the community safe ride program, or call a sober friend or family member to get you home safely or simply stay where you are.

TxDOT will maintain important information, including videos, on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/KnowWhenToPass](http://www.facebook.com/KnowWhenToPass)) and YouTube ([www.youtube.com/KnowWhenToPass](http://www.youtube.com/KnowWhenToPass)), and TxDOT officials will be tweeting on the issue.

### **The 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 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 [www.twitter.com/txdot](http://www.twitter.com/txdot).

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