



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 Targets Holiday Revelers with Anti-Drunk Driving Blitz**

***Campaign is Supported by New Survey Results Indicating More Texas Motorists Are Adopting Alternatives to Impaired Driving***

AUSTIN, TX — With the holiday season upon us, the Texas Department of Transportation is pulling out all of the stops to remind motorists not to get behind the wheel if they've been drinking and to find a sober ride home or call a cab.

Throughout the month of December, convenience stores, bars and restaurants, gas stations — even movie theaters— in major Texas markets will carry TxDOT's campaign messages, urging Texans to celebrate responsibly.

Santa's reindeer will adorn bar coasters, pint glasses, bathroom mirror decals, digital signs over bathroom urinals, street posters, and gas pump nozzles. The reindeer's message will read, "Don't drive if you're tipsy, buzzed or Blitzen. Call a cab or get a sober ride home."

Santa himself is getting in on the action this year, with a brand new interactive "31 Days of Holiday Cheer" calendar. Each day unlocks games, recipes, tips, and videos to make the season merry and bright, all with the reminder to keep the holidays happy and plan a sober ride. Facebook users can engage with the new content at [www.facebook.com/SantaInTexas](http://www.facebook.com/SantaInTexas).

"The holidays can mean many things to Texans, including family dinners, office Christmas parties and New Year's Eve festivities. As we celebrate the season, we're encouraging motorists to keep the holidays merry and to plan a sober ride home," said Carol Rawson, TxDOT Traffic Operations Director. "That's why, throughout the month of December, 'don't drink and drive' reminders will be popping up online as well as at locations where alcohol is served or purchased."

This year's campaign is supported by new Driver Awareness and Attitudes survey results, which indicate that fewer Texas motorists are drinking and driving. Indeed, according to the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) survey conducted this summer, motorists are now more likely to designate a sober driver, call a friend or family member, stay put, or to take a taxi or public transportation than to drive while impaired.

Approximately 75 percent of the survey respondents reported they had been exposed to an impaired driving message within the past 30 days.

TxDOT, which commissioned the TTI survey in partnership with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, has good reason to celebrate these findings.

"After years of working to educate the public on the importance of planning ahead instead of driving while impaired, these survey results highlight that our public advocacy campaigns are working," added Carol Rawson, TxDOT Traffic Operations Director.

“We’re thrilled that Texas motorists are retaining the message that alcohol and driving don’t mix and that drunk driving will not be tolerated on our roads.”

Far from resting on its laurels, however, TxDOT will be working with police departments and sheriff’s offices across the Lone Star State to reduce impaired driving throughout the holiday season. Law enforcement statewide will be working overtime to find and arrest impaired drivers from now through New Year’s Day.

The Texas Restaurant Association, the Texas Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association, the Texas Package Store Association, the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission and the Texas Municipal Police Association are all working with TxDOT to help distribute holiday impaired driving prevention messages.

Convicted first-time DWI offenders face a fine of up to \$2,000, loss of their driver’s license for up to a year, and up to 180 days in jail. Safety officials say other costs associated with an impaired driving arrest and conviction can add up to more than \$17,000 for bail, legal fees, court appearances, court-ordered classes, vehicle insurance increases, and other expenses.

In 2010 there were 3,024 fatalities on Texas roads, 1,102 were the result of alcohol-related crashes. This makes alcohol a factor in 36.4 percent of the traffic fatalities in Texas.

### **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](https://www.facebook.com/txdot). Follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/txdot](https://www.twitter.com/txdot).

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