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Sally Ellertson
Public Information Officer
141 West Renfro
Burleson, Texas 76028-4261
817-426-9622
F: 817-426-9390
sellertson@burlesontx.com
www.burlesontx.com

If you talk or text while driving, chances are you may end up in a crash, or put the safety of others at risk.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) launched the Distracted Driving Campaign on March 30 in Austin. The Metroplex hosted a press event today at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington. Derek Holland, pitcher for the Texas Rangers, was a guest speaker. The campaign is Talk. Text. Crash.

April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month. The goal is to raise awareness of the dangers and encourage Texans to put down their cell phones while driving.

According to TxDOT, distracted driving is becoming more common and dangerous, causing traffic crashes and fatalities. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) shows the proportion of fatalities reportedly associated with driver distraction increased from 10 percent in 2005 to 16 percent in 2009. Twenty percent of injury crashes nationally in 2009 involved reports of distracted driving.

In Texas, nearly one in four crashes involves driver distraction, according to TxDOT. In 2009, over 100,000 vehicles were involved in crashes where distraction in the vehicle, driver inattention or cell phone use was cited. Of those, more than 400 were fatal.

In 2010 Burleson police officers wrote reports on 538 crashes. Driver inattention was cited as a contributing factor in 66 of the crashes and as a "may have contributed" in 28. Distraction in a vehicle was a contributing factor in 11 crashes and as a "may have contributed" in five crashes. Cell phone use counted as a factor in four crashes and as a "may have contributed" in four crashes.

According to the Talk. Text. Crash campaign, distractions include talking to other passengers; eating; smoking; manipulating dashboard controls; reaching for something in the vehicle; and talking or texting on a cell phone. Cell phone use is one of the most common and a major cause of distracted driving traffic crashes and fatalities. At any given moment during daylight hours, more than 800,000 vehicles are being driven by someone using a hand-held cell phone, according to NHTSA. In 2009, 3,308 crashes in Texas were attributed to cell phone use and 41 of those crashes were fatal.

The Talk. Text. Crash. campaign aims to reduce distracted driving, not only for National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, but throughout the year. TxDOT asks drivers to put away their cell phones and wait until they arrive at their destination to use their phone. Although cell phone use is the most easily recognized distraction, all in-vehicle distractions are unsafe and can cause crashes or fatalities.

The statewide campaign is a partnership between TxDOT and Nationwide Insurance.