



Texas Department of Public Safety

DPS Increases Enforcement for July Fourth Holiday

AUSTIN – The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Texas Highway Patrol is stepping up enforcement efforts this July Fourth holiday aiming to keep people safe as they celebrate America’s Independence Day.

“We know people will be out celebrating our nation’s freedom and we encourage everyone to do it in a responsible way,” said DPS Director Steven McCraw. “Please be mindful of our state’s traffic laws, be courteous of other drivers on the roads and make safety your first priority so everyone can have a good holiday.”

Operation CARE (Crash Awareness Reduction Effort) will run July 3 and July 4 and focuses on reducing crashes and violations of the state’s *Move Over, Slow Down* law, which requires all drivers to slow down when police, fire, EMS, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) vehicles and tow trucks are stopped on the side of the road with their emergency lights activated.

DPS offers the following safety tips for people driving during the Fourth of July holiday:

- **Don’t drink and drive.** Make alternate plans if you are consuming alcohol.
- **Move Over or Slow Down** for police, fire, EMS, TxDOT vehicles and tow trucks stopped on the side of the road with emergency lights activated.
- **Buckle up** everyone in the vehicle — it’s the law.
- **Slow down**, especially in bad weather, heavy traffic, unfamiliar areas or construction zones.
- **Eliminate distractions** while driving, including the use of mobile devices. Texas law prohibits the use of portable wireless devices to read, write or send an electronic message unless the vehicle is stopped. If you’re using a navigation device or app, have a passenger operate it so you can keep your eyes on the road.
- **Drive defensively**, as holiday travel can present additional challenges.
- On multi-lane roads, **use the left lane for passing only**. Not only is it courteous driving and avoids impeding traffic, Texas law requires slower traffic to keep to the right and to use the left lane for passing only (when posted).
- **Don’t cut in front of large trucks**, and try not to brake quickly in front of them. They can’t maneuver as easily as passenger vehicles and pickup trucks.
- If you can **Steer It, Clear It**: If you are involved in a non-injury crash and your vehicle can be moved, clear the traffic lanes to minimize traffic impact. Leaving vehicles in a traffic lane increases traffic congestion and leaves those involved with an increased risk

of harm or a secondary wreck. On some highways, if you don't move your vehicle when it's safe to do so, it's against the law.

- **Keep the Texas Roadside Assistance** number stored in your phone. Dial **1-800-525-5555** for any type of assistance. The number can also be found on the back of a Texas Driver License.
- **Check your vehicle** to make sure it is properly maintained and always ensure your cargo is secure.
- **Report** road hazards or anything suspicious to the nearest law enforcement agency.
- **Monitor weather and road conditions** wherever you are traveling. For road conditions and closures in Texas, visit [Drive Texas](#).