

DISTRACTIONS AND CAUTIONS

Cell Phones and Driving.

People who use wireless phones while driving have a 34 percent higher risk of a collision than those who do not talk and drive. Even using a hands-free phone can be dangerous, because talking on the phone diverts your attention from driving. Long, complex conversations make you four times more likely to have a car crash. Pull safely off the road if you need to make a call.



Wake Up and See The Road.

Texas highways have more than 100 rest stops where motorists can take regular safety breaks. In addition, drowsy drivers can take these precautions:

- avoid driving during late night and early morning hours
- set realistic travel goals
- eat healthy meals and avoid alcohol and other drugs
- switch drivers every two hours, even if you don't feel tired
- stop every two hours to stretch

A Car is Not a Boat.

Flash flooding is the number one cause of weather-related deaths in Texas. As little as two feet of flooding will float most vehicles. Avoid flooded roads, streets and low areas.

- you can be fined up to \$200 for driving around barriers blocking low-water crossing (Move or tamper with a barricade, and you can be fined up to \$1,000 and/or jailed up to two years in jail.)
- never try to walk, swim or drive through swift water
- stay informed about weather conditions when you are driving
- if your vehicle stalls in deep water, leave it and move to higher ground, if you can do so safely

Source: *Road Tips*, Texas Department of Transportation.

Railroad Crossings

Texas law requires motorists to yield the right of way to trains. It is also against the law to cross tracks if a train is visible or to drive around gates that have been lowered at a railroad crossing. If the gates are down and no train is coming, the road is closed. (WARNING: Not all railroad crossings are marked with gates or flashing signals, especially in rural areas.)

In a collision with a train, you are 40 times more likely to be killed than if you were in a collision with another car.

Reduce speed when approaching crossings, look both ways and listen for the sound of a train.

If red lights are flashing or if crossing arms have been lowered, stop.

Never stop on tracks. (A train going 50 miles per hour needs a mile and a half to stop.)

Be sure all tracks are clear before crossing. (There may be more than one set of tracks.)

NOTE: School/transit buses and trucks carrying hazardous materials must come to a complete stop at all railroad crossings. Don't rear-end vehicles that stop before crossing tracks.