



INDUSTRY STATION

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News Release

Leroy D. Baca, Sheriff

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(Los Angeles County, CA) – As part of April's Distracted Driving Awareness Month campaign, The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Traffic Services Detail will be actively ticketing those texting or operating hand-held cell phones on April 24, 2013, in the City of Industry.

Drivers who break the law and place themselves and others in danger will be cited with no warnings. The current minimum ticket cost is \$159, with subsequent tickets costing at least \$279. Last April, over 57,000 tickets were written statewide for texting and hand-held cell use. There were nearly 450,000 convictions in 2012. Whether it's a ticket or a crash, as the campaign theme states, "It's Not Worth It!"

Distracted driving is a serious traffic safety concern that puts everyone on the road at risk. In recent years, hundreds have been killed and thousands seriously injured in California as a result of collisions that involved at least one driver who was distracted. Nationally, an estimated 3,331 died in 2011. As a result, law enforcement across the state, including Traffic Services Detail Deputies are increasingly cracking down on cell phone use and texting. This April will see over 225 local agencies plus the CHP conducting zero tolerance enforcements.

"We all know that talking on our cell phones while driving is distracting, but that doesn't stop some people from continuing to do it," said Traffic Services Detail's Commanding Officer Captain Shaun J. Mathers "This effort is intended to educate our community about the dangers of cell phone use while driving. We hope that once people see the statistics and realize the danger involved, they will change their driving habits to help protect themselves, their families, and others on the road."

Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. Younger, inexperienced drivers under 20 years old have the highest proportion of distraction-related fatal crashes. In addition, studies show that texting while driving can delay a driver's reaction time just as severely as having a blood alcohol content of a legally drunk driver.

Studies also show that there is no difference in the risks between hands-free and hand-held cell phone conversations, both of which can result in "inattention blindness" which occurs when the brain isn't seeing what is clearly visible because the drivers' focus is on the phone conversation

and not on the road. When over one third of your brain's functioning that should be on your driving moves over to cell phone talking, you can become a cell phone s24 "zombie."

To avoid a distracted driving ticket or crash, Traffic Services Detail offers drivers the following tips:

- Turn off your phone and/or put it out of reach while driving
- Include in your outgoing message that you can't answer while you are driving
- Don't call or text anyone at a time when you think they may be driving

Partner to prevent or report crime by contacting your local Sheriff's station. Or if you wish to remain Anonymous, call "LA Crime Stoppers" by dialing 800-222-TIPS (8477), texting the letters TIPLA plus your tip to CRIMES (274637), or using the website <http://lacrimestoppers.org>

Funding for these operations is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety <http://www.ots.ca.gov/> through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration <http://www.nhtsa.gov/>

For Additional Information Contact:

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