



EL SEGUNDO POLICE DEPARTMENT

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DAVID CUMMINGS, CHIEF OF POLICE

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DON'T GET CAUGHT "TEXT MESSAGING WHILE DRIVING" IT'S THE LAW

New California Law Bans Texting for All Drivers

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law a bill prohibiting adults in California from text messaging while driving. It takes effect January 1, 2009.

The new law, previously SB28, compliments our existing law that took effect July 1, 2008 that requires drivers to use hands-free devices while talking on the phone. Both laws are designed to increase traffic safety by reducing distractions inside vehicles and keep drivers' hands on the wheel and their eyes on the road.

Another law that took effect in July made it illegal for teens younger than 18 to use any type of cell phone, pager, text messaging device or laptop while at the wheel.

This new law removes a loophole that allowed adults to use hand-held devices to send, receive or read text messages while driving. As is the case for violating the existing cell phone law, police will be able to pull over adults found doing any of the above. Violators will face at least \$20 fines plus additional penalties. Subsequent offenses would result in up to \$50 fines.

As a reminder, there are still several exceptions to the law, including making an emergency call to a police agency, fire department medical provider or other emergency services provider. This law does not prevent law enforcement or

other emergency services personnel from using a wireless telephone while operating an authorized emergency vehicle.

There is no grace period for the enforcement of these laws. The El Segundo Police Department seeks to educate the public of the dangers of operating a vehicle while using a wireless telephone and text messaging device. We will be enforcing the new law when it takes effect January 1, 2009.

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