



# EL SEGUNDO POLICE DEPARTMENT

348 MAIN STREET, EL SEGUNDO, CA 90245

(310) 524-2200

MITCH TAVERA, CHIEF OF POLICE

## Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### El Segundo Police Joins Effort to Crack Down on Cell Phone Use and Texting

*Texting and Driving Will Cost You: First Ticket Minimum \$159*

As part of California's first *Distracted Driving Awareness Month* in April, the El Segundo Police Department will be conducting "zero tolerance" enforcement for cell phone use and texting. A ticket for violating either the hands free or no texting law costs a minimum of \$159, and subsequent tickets cost \$279.

Distracted driving is a serious traffic safety concern that puts everyone on the road at risk, joining speeding and alcohol as leading factors in fatal and serious injury crashes. As a result, law enforcement across the state is increasingly cracking down on cell phone use and texting. Starting April 4<sup>th</sup> and throughout the month, El Segundo PD will join over 225 local agencies plus 103 CHP Area Commands conducting zero tolerance enforcements.

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 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.

There are simple measures drivers can take to minimize distractions in the vehicle:

- Turn your phone off or put it out of reach before starting the car.
- Alert callers that you are unable to take calls when driving by changing your voicemail message.
- Make it a point not to call or text anyone who may be driving, such as during the commute to and from work or school, especially parents calling teen drivers.
- If you do need to make an important call or respond to a text message, pull over to a safe place to do so.
- If going cold turkey is too much of a stretch and you just can't turn your phone off, consider using one of the available mobile phone apps that holds calls and incoming texts.

Please contact El Segundo Police Lieutenant Carlos Mendoza, (310)524-2254 [cmendoza@elsegundo.org](mailto:cmendoza@elsegundo.org) or California Highway Patrol PIO Sgt. Denise Joslin, (818) 240-8200 [DeJoslin@chp.ca.gov](mailto:DeJoslin@chp.ca.gov) if you have any questions regarding the enforcement efforts.