



# MEMORANDUM

**TO: All Employees**

**DATE: December 15, 2011**

**FROM: Phil Wilson**

*PW*

**SUBJECT: TxDOT Distracted Driving/ Equipment Operation Policy**

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The purpose of this policy is to protect your safety and the safety of others by limiting the use of cell phones and other wireless devices when driving or operating equipment. These distractions may prevent you from concentrating on the safe operation of the vehicle/equipment and thus lead to a tragic incident.

The National Safety Council has indicated that the unsafe use of cell phones and other wireless devices has contributed to a significant safety risk to motorists, their passengers and others on the road. In fact, scientific studies have shown that cell phone use while driving increases the risk of being in a crash 4 to 5 times. To be consistent with TxDOT's "Safety: Mission Zero" initiative, safety must come first above all other concerns.

***In accordance with recent updates in the Equipment Manual, Chapter 5 Section 1 (see Manual Notice 2011-01), as of December 15, 2011 when driving a motor vehicle, operating heavy equipment, forklifts, or ferryboat on Department business, the following restrictions shall apply:***

- TxDOT employees shall not use hand held mobile communication devices (e.g. cell phones, smart phones, tablets, etc.)
- Texting is prohibited at all times
- A Global Positioning System (GPS) shall not be adjusted

**TxDOT employees are required to:**

- Park in a safe area, away from traffic, if a call, text or e-mail must be made or received while on the road without a hands free device. (As a reminder, the shoulder of the roadway is not considered a safe area to park.)
- Pull over to a safe place and put the vehicle in "Park" to make adjustments to a Global Positioning System (GPS) or other navigation devices.

These restrictions do not apply if the TxDOT employee is directed to be involved in an emergency situation that requires the need for traffic control, fire, EMS or police response. Two-way radio work related communication may be used by employees while driving or operating equipment. Employees may use a hands free communication devices. In all such exceptions, cautionary safety measures shall be practiced.

Each supervisor has the responsibility to remind employees of this policy and to ensure that it is being followed.