



# KEEP SAFE

A Monthly Publication for Texas Electric Cooperatives

July 2011

## Safe driving is serious business

*Focused driving is keeping your eyes on the road ahead, your hands on the wheel and your mind on your driving.*

*“We’ve looked to see if we can find people who can talk on the phone and drive safely. There are 2% of people who might be as gifted as a skilled fighter pilot. But, we have yet to find anybody who can safely text and drive.”*

– Dr. David Strayer, University of Utah

BEHAVIOR	INCREASED CRASH RISK
Texting	23 times
Reaching for a moving object	9 times
Driving drowsy	4 times
Looking at an external object	3.7 times
Reading	3.4 times
Using a cell phone	4 times*
Applying makeup	3 times

### Attention-Grabbing Facts

- Distracted driving is the presence of anything that can distract a driver’s physical and mental attention from driving.
- Studies indicate that distracted driving is a factor in more than 20% of crashes. This represents more than 300,000 crashes each year.<sup>1</sup>
- Driver distraction was reported to have been involved in 16% of all fatal crashes in 2008.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2008, almost 6,000 people died and approximately 500,000 people were injured in crashes that were reported to have involved distraction.<sup>3</sup>
- A recent poll conducted by Nationwide Insurance indicated 98% of people feel they are safe drivers, yet nearly three-quarters report that they perform other tasks while driving.<sup>4</sup>
- Approximately 1.5 million drivers are using a cell phone at a given daylight moment.<sup>5</sup>
- It is estimated that a driver makes an average of 20 major decisions during every mile of driving, and drivers frequently have less than one-half second to act to avoid a collision.<sup>6</sup>
- A recent simulator study showed that drivers on cell phones look but fail to see up to 50% of the information in the driving environment.<sup>7</sup>
- Studies have indicated that text messaging on a cell phone while driving increased crash risk more than 23 times.<sup>8</sup>

Source: Network of Employers for Traffic Safety

\*Since cell phone use occurs more frequently and for longer durations, this is the #1 source of driver inattention behind the wheel.

(Source: Virginia Tech Transportation Institute Naturalistic Driving Study, Relative Risk Estimates for Crash/Near Crash Inattention Events)

<sup>1</sup> NHTSA, 2009

<sup>2</sup> An Examination of Driver Distraction as Recorded in NHTSA Databases. NHTSA, 2009

<sup>3</sup> NHTSA, 2009

<sup>4</sup> Nationwide Insurance Driving While Distracted Survey, 2008

<sup>5</sup> NHTSA, 2008

<sup>6</sup> AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

<sup>7</sup> University of Utah Simulator Study, 2008

<sup>8</sup> Driver Distraction in Commercial Vehicle Operations DOT

## July: Bring up baby — safely

*When the Home Safety Council surveyed new parents, it found that fewer than three in 10 were concerned about any of the leading safety issues for babies. Be proactive about creating a safer environment for your infant.*

### Minimize choking and suffocation hazards

- Put babies to sleep on their back, alone and in a safety-approved crib.
- Keep pillows, blankets and toys out of cribs.
- Make sure the mattress is firm, with no space between it and the frame. Use a tight fitted sheet.
- Replace any window blinds that have cords with new “cordless” blinds.
- Keep items like buttons, coins, jewelry, toys and deflated balloons out of reach — if it can fit through a small-parts tester or a toilet-paper tube, it poses a choking hazard.
- Never feed infants or toddlers small, round foods such as hot dogs, grapes, popcorn or peanuts. Cut food into small pieces.
- Check the labels of toys to determine a safe age for use and follow the guidelines.

### Protect against burns and scalding

- Because babies and young children are at high risk of hot-water scalding, set your water heater at 120 degrees Fahrenheit (F).
- Watch children carefully when they are in or near the tub, and never leave them alone.
- Use a water thermometer to ensure that the bath water is between 96 and 100 degrees F.
- Consider installing special shower and tub spouts that prevent hot-water burns.
- In the kitchen, use masking tape on the floor to create a “danger” zone at least three feet from the stove. Teach children to stay out of the “danger” zone at all times.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove while you are cooking. Use back burners if possible.

— Home Safety Council  
For more home safety tips, visit [MySafeHome.org](http://MySafeHome.org)

## Proper material handling avoids dangerous injuries

According to the National Safety Council, most on-the-job injuries occur to fingers and hands. Employees who handle materials should:

- Inspect materials for slivers, jagged or sharp edges, burrs, and rough or slippery surfaces.
- Grasp objects with a firm grip.
- Keep fingers away from pinch and shear points, especially when setting down materials.
- Keep hands away from the objects’ ends when handling lumber, pipe or other long objects to prevent hands from being pinched.
- Wipe off greasy, wet, slippery or dirty objects before trying to handle them.
- Keep hands free of oil and grease.

Employees also should use gloves, hand leathers or other hand protectors when applicable. Use extra caution when moving or revolving machinery. In some cases, employees can use handles or holders to move objects. For example, use handles for moving auto batteries, tongs for feeding material into metal-forming machinery, or baskets for carrying laboratory samples.

— *Safety+Health*

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## Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July



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# Texas Electric Cooperatives

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## **2011 TEC LOSS CONTROL SCHOOLS (33 Schools)**

Regulator Recloser Capacitors (Merkel)	January 11-14
Metering (Gonzales)	January 18-21
2 Day Transformer (San Augustine)	January 26-27
Transformer (Livingston)	February 8-11
Metering (Lubbock)	February 15-18
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (San Augustine)	February 22-25
Advanced Pole Climbing (Gonzales)	February 22-25
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (Tahoka)	March 1-4
Troubleshooting (Greenville)	March 8-11
Transformer (Gonzales)	March 29-April 1
Metering (Merkel)	April 5-8
Basic Pole Climbing (San Augustine)	April 5-8
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (McGregor)	April 12-15
Hotline 1-4 (Henderson)	April 25-29
Basic Pole Climbing (Gonzales)	April 26-29
Underground (Quitman)	May 2-6
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (Gonzales)	May 10-13
Transformer (Tahoka)	May 17-20
Hotline 1-4 (Merkel)	May 23-27
Digger Operation and Safety School (Merkel)	May 23-27
Metering (McGregor)	June 7-10
Basic Pole Climbing (Tahoka)	June 7-10
Underground (Gonzales)	June 13-17
Metering (Livingston)	June 21-24
Troubleshooting (Livingston)	July 26-29
Regulator Recloser Capacitors (Greenville)	August 16-19
Hotline 1-4 (Gonzales)	August 29-Sept 2
Digger Operation and Safety School (Gonzales)	August 29-Sept 2
Underground (McGregor)	September 12-16
Hotline 1-4 (Levelland)	September 26-30
Underground (Merkel)	October 3-7
Underground (Levelland)	October 17-21
Hotline 1-4 (Livingston)	October 24-28