

Seatbelts and Texting While Driving

TCOLE 2046



Texas Peace Officers are expected to follow the rules, regulations, policies and procedures of their respective departments.

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Call For Service



- During Patrol operations, our attention is drawn to many different activities and objects:
 - Operating a motor vehicle
 - Looking at a CAD screen
 - Talking on the radio
 - Operating emergency equipment
 - Looking for suspicious activity
 - Looking for a specific vehicle, license plate or address
 - Preparing to park and quickly exit responding to an emergency call for service
 - Our cell phone

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Texting and Driving

- In Texas it is illegal to text and drive. There is no exemption for Peace Officers for texting.
- As seen on the previous slide, we have a ton of work-related distractions already in our environment and do not need to compound that by texting on our phone also.
- Watch the video below and discuss.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=Tulsa+PD+Seatbelt+and+Texting&mid=9D6512574F4A81E77F209D6512574F4A81E77F20&FORM=VIRE>

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Seatbelts and Texting



- It is very possible this Officer survived this crash because he was wearing his seatbelt. He at least saved himself from suffering serious injuries.
- If he had not been distracted by texting, might he have been able to see the vehicle crossing the median and taken evasive action to avoid the collision? Possibly.
- If the Officer had been at fault in this accident due to texting while driving (it appears he was not at fault), is there a chance for a civil negligence claim against you and/or your agency because the accident was caused by negligence through texting while driving? Possibly.

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Seatbelts and Texting

- Many mistakenly believe there is an exemption for Texas Peace Officers regarding the wearing of seatbelts in the Traffic Code.
- This is simply not true! Seatbelts are required by law for all drivers and passengers in Texas.
- On face value, we stop and enforce seatbelt violations every day....but some of us refuse to wear them while on duty. Hypocritical? Just a bit!
- Do we need to be able to quickly exit our vehicle responding to an emergency call? Absolutely. Will unbuckling a seatbelt slow you down that much in reality? No

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Seatbelts and Texting



- These two best practices are really very simple to follow:
 - WEAR YOUR SEATBELT
 - DO NOT TEXT AND DRIVE
- Don't take a chance!

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5 Cornerstones



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