Public Awareness and Attitudes Toward Traffic Safety Issues in Texas: 2011 Survey Results

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in cooperation with

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U. S. Department of Transportation

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PUBLIC AWARENESS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD TRAFFIC SAFETY ISSUES IN TEXAS: 2011 SURVEY RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

The federal government requires that performance measures be used by states to track progress toward each traffic safety goal in their highway safety program. The Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) have developed a minimum set of performance measures to be used by states as they develop and implement their highway safety plans. One of the performance measures that GHSA and NHTSA recommend is surveys to track driver attitudes and awareness of traffic safety programs. As pointed out in a white paper preceding the federal regulations, “surveys can provide valuable information from drivers or the general public that can’t be obtained any other way.” This information can include views on the priorities of various traffic safety issues and on potential law or policy changes, knowledge of laws and penalties, perceptions of enforcement, awareness of recent enforcement and media campaigns, and self-reported behavior.” NHTSA recommends a core set of questions and guidelines for conducting these type surveys.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) contracted with the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) to conduct a 2010 baseline survey and a follow-up survey in 2011, from which data pertaining to performance measures could be collected. TTI developed a sampling plan and questionnaire which included the core questions recommended by NHTSA. This report describes the survey methodology and provides results for the survey conducted in July/August of 2011. Changes from the 2010 survey results are also discussed.

SURVEY METHOD

Among the recommended survey methods is a pen and paper survey at Driver License (DL) offices. DL office surveys offer the advantage of access to a reasonably representative sample of drivers and are more cost-effective than other surveys for this type of data collection. Also, as pointed out in the NHTSA Driver Survey white paper, DL office surveys have low refusal rates (10-30% or less), and the core questions plus additional questions can be asked easily on one page front and back for a quick and efficient data collection effort.

Site/Sample Selection

The sample that was taken from the DL office survey is a ‘convenient’ sample of Texas residents, rather than a random representative sample. A random representative sample would contain all the drivers in the state as a sampling pool from which respondents would be randomly drawn and surveyed. In this way, statistical error estimates and confidence intervals could be calculated. Due to time and budget constraints, however, TTI relied on the convenient sample to generate a sample size large enough to generate meaningful data from four regions of the state,
rather than a truly random sample. As indicated in the description of respondent characteristics in the section below, the sample mirrors the Texas population demographics reasonably. No weights have been applied to the data to account for geographic or demographic representation.

TxDOT groups its 25 district offices into four regional areas for administrative purposes. The map below illustrates the four regions, which also formed the first level of the TTI survey sampling plan. There are 184 DL offices throughout Texas. Three survey sites were selected in each of the four regions, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 1. TxDOT Region Map
Figure 2. Driver Awareness and Attitude Survey Site Locations
The 12 sites represent 6.5 percent of the 184 possible locations, but are among the highest volume offices of the 184. A target sample size of 500 drivers in each region was set, for a total sample size of 2000. The minimum of 500 per region would provide sufficient data to analyze results for each region. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the target sample for each survey site.

Table 1. Survey Sites and Target Sample Sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TxDOT Region</th>
<th>DL Office Site</th>
<th>Target Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>El Paso</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amarillo</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Angelo</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ft. Worth</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wichita Falls</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>Houston North</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Houston South</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beaumont</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McAllen</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questionnaire Development

The foundation of the survey instrument was the ten core questions recommended by NHTSA, which are:
1. In the past 60 days, how many times have you driven a motor vehicle within 2 hours after drinking alcoholic beverages?
2. In the past 30 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about alcohol impaired driving (or drunk driving) enforcement by police?
3. What do you think the chances are of someone getting arrested if they drive after drinking?
4. How often do you use safety belts when you drive or ride in a car, van, sport utility vehicle or pick up?
5. In the past 60 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about seat belt law enforcement by police?
6. What do you think the chances are of getting a ticket if you don't wear your safety belt?
7. On a local road with a speed limit of 30 mph, how often do you drive faster than 35 mph?
8. On a road with a speed limit of 65 mph, how often do you drive faster than 70 mph?
9. In the past 30 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about speed enforcement by police?
10. What do you think the chances are of getting a ticket if you drive over the speed limit?

In addition to these, 10 questions related to traffic safety issues of specific interest to TxDOT were included on the questionnaire, and five questions for background/demographic
information were included. The length was restricted to one page, front and back. A Spanish translation of the questionnaire was available. The questionnaire is provided as Appendix A.

Survey Administration

The survey was administered during the last week of July and first week of August, 2011. This time period is prior to the annual impaired driving enforcement mobilization encompassing the Labor Day holiday and seven to eight weeks following the annual Click It Or Ticket campaign encompassing the Memorial Day holiday.

Prior to administration of the survey, the protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Texas A&M University. The IRB required that an Information Sheet accompany the questionnaire for reference by the respondents, and that no minors be included in the respondent pool. The Information Sheet is provided as Appendix B.

Permission to conduct the survey was secured from the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) headquarters office. TTI staff surveyed in each DL office one to two days. The procedure was to approach customers in the lobby area who were either waiting for service or accompanying someone conducting business at the station, state the purpose for the contact, and ask for their willingness to fill out the questionnaire anonymously. Each waiting customer over 18 years of age was eligible for the survey; however, no attempt was made to randomize or purposefully select respondents or to convert refusals. Respondents were provided a clipboard and survey form; the questionnaire was self-administered unless assistance was needed. Surveys averaged less than five minutes to complete.

RESULTS

Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Target sample size goals were achieved in each of the 12 survey site locations, and the target 500 for each region was also reached. The total number of completed surveys was 2,156. Approximately five percent (105) of the questionnaires were completed in Spanish. Table 2 shows the number of responses for each survey site.
Table 2. Completed Surveys by Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TxDOT Region</th>
<th>DL Office Site</th>
<th>Target Sample Size</th>
<th>Total Number of Completed Surveys</th>
<th>Number of Surveys in Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>El Paso</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amarillo</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Angelo</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ft. Worth</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wichita Falls</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>Houston North</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Houston South</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beaumont</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McAllen</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures 3, 4, and 5 illustrate the demographic composition of the survey respondents along with comparable statewide population characteristics. None of the survey respondent characteristics stand out as being disproportionate contributors to the sample population compared to the statewide population. The number of seniors over 65 in the sample is below the statewide proportion of seniors (5.3 percent compared to 10.2 percent); and the number of 18-21 year-old respondents is high in comparison to the statewide proportion in this age group (15.5 percent compared to 8.6 percent). However, these proportions in the sample are likely more comparable to the population of Texas licensed drivers.

Figure 3. Gender Composition
Core Question Responses

**Impaired Driving.** Three of the core questions pertained to impaired driving and addressed self-reported impaired driving during the previous two months, awareness of recent impaired driving enforcement efforts, and perceptions of risk of arrest if driving impaired. Approximately 75
percent of the survey respondents reported they had been exposed to an impaired driving message within the past 30 days. When asked about frequency of drinking and driving, 89 percent of the survey respondents said they either did not drink or did not drink and drive. Of those who reported having driven within two hours after drinking in the past 60 days, 62 drivers (or 23% of those who drank and drove) reported having done it five or more times.

**Figure 6. Awareness of Impaired Driving Enforcement**

![Bar Chart: Awareness of Impaired Driving Enforcement]

- **Yes:** 75.1%
- **No:** 19.1%
- **Not Sure:** 5.8%

**Figure 7. Reported Driving After Drinking Within Past 60 Days**

![Pie Chart: Reported Driving After Drinking]

- **I do not drink and drive:** 55.2%
- **I do not drink:** 33.8%
- **1 to 5:** 7.7%
- **6 to 10:** 0.9%
- **More than 10:** 0.9%
- **None:** 1.6%
Drivers perceived a greater likelihood of an encounter with law enforcement as a result of driving impaired, relative to speeding or not wearing a seatbelt. Almost 60 percent said it would be very likely someone would be arrested if they drive after drinking, and another 34.2 percent said it would be somewhat likely or likely. Only 6.6 percent of the drivers surveyed thought it would be unlikely to be arrested for drinking and driving.

*Figure 8. Likelihood of Impaired Driving Arrest*

![Bar chart showing the likelihood of impaired driving arrest](image)

**What do you think the chances are of someone getting arrested if they drive after drinking?**

- Very Likely: 59.1%
- Somewhat Likely: 18.6%
- Likely: 15.6%
- Unlikely: 4.0%
- Very Unlikely: 2.6%

**Seat Belt Use.** As with impaired driving questions, three of the core questions pertained to seatbelt use and addressed self-reported recent belt use, awareness of seat belt law enforcement activity, and perceptions of risk of receiving seat belt violation citations. The vast majority of respondents said they always wear their seat belt, with almost 96.5 percent reporting they always or nearly always wear them. Only 29 people out of the 2,144 who responded to this question said they seldom or never wear their seat belt. Two-thirds of the survey respondents reported they had been exposed to a seat belt law enforcement message within the past 30 days. Almost half believed it is very likely that they would be ticketed if they drove or rode without a seat belt.
**Figure 9. Frequency of Reported Belt Use**

How often do you use seat belts when you drive or ride in a car, van, SUV or pickup?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>89.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearly Always</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 10. Awareness of Seat Belt Law Enforcement**

In the past 60 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about seat belt law enforcement by police?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Speeding. Four questions on the survey pertained to speeding; two regarding self-reports of speeding on local and higher speed roads; one regarding perceived enforcement; and one regarding likelihood of getting a ticket for speeding. As seen in the graphs below, speeding is relatively common compared to the two issues covered above. Almost 30 percent of those surveyed said they sometime exceed the speed limit by 5 mph on local roads, and 22 percent said they sometime exceed highway speeds by 5 mph. Another twenty percent said they speed on local roads (30 mph limit) about half or most of the time, and 17.8 percent speed on high-speed roads (70 mph limit) about half or most of the time.
Figure 13. Exceeding Speed Limit on High-Speed Roads

The likelihood of a citation was perceived as less for speeding than for not using a seat belt. Additionally, exposure to speed enforcement messages was reported as lower than for other messages mentioned above.

Figure 14. Likelihood of Speeding Ticket
Texas-Specific Question Responses

A series of five questions were included in the survey to examine public attitudes toward impaired driving related issues. Respondents were asked if they favor or oppose sobriety checkpoints in Texas. Overall, approximately 55.6 percent were in favor, with one-third of those surveyed strongly in favor of checkpoints. As shown in Figure 16, about 11 percent were strongly opposed to sobriety checkpoints, another 12 percent were opposed, and the remaining 21 percent were neutral on the subject.

Figure 16. Opinions on Sobriety Checkpoints
Three questions were designed to gather additional data related to drinking and driving behavior. Respondents were first asked if they drive after drinking more than they should. This was based on their own assessment of what ‘more than they should’ would be. This was followed by a question on why they drove after drinking too much, and then by a checklist of actions they take regularly to get home after drinking too much. Eighty-five percent of those surveyed said they had not driven after drinking too much, and an additional 11 percent said they very rarely drove after drinking. The table below indicates the frequency with which the checklist items were marked as actions drivers take regularly after drinking too much. Clearly, driving anyway is the least utilized option and letting someone who has not been drinking drive is the course of action reported most often. Using public transportation was next lowest to driving as a regular action to get home.

### Table 3. Regular Alternatives to Driving Impaired Taken by Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When you think you've had too much to drink and you need to get home, what are some things you do regularly?</th>
<th>Response Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take a cab.</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take public transportation.</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay at my location until I’m sober enough to drive.</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call a friend or family member to give me a ride.</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk.</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let someone that hasn’t been drinking drive me home.</td>
<td>617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let someone that has had less to drink than me drive me home.</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive anyway.</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 lists the reasons respondents checked for driving after they had too much to drink. In 35 cases, drivers did not give their decision any thought. Approximately 20 percent who said they had driven impaired said they did so because they had no other way to get home, 20 percent drove because they were close to their home, and 15 percent did not think they were impaired at the time.
Table 4. Reasons for Driving Impaired

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why have you driven after drinking too much?</th>
<th>Response Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had no other way to get home.</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't designate a driver ahead of time.</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was close to home.</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought I was ok/not drunk at the time.</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe I’m a good driver after drinking.</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had other people with me that I had to take home/somewhere.</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t want to leave my car/vehicle.</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was in a hurry.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanted to go to multiple other places before going home.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t remember making the choice.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never even thought about it.</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Texas, the legal limit for intoxication is .08 blood alcohol content (BAC). Just over half (52.8%) of the drivers surveyed checked the correct response choice for the legal intoxication question. Figure 17 shows that almost 30 percent were not sure, 7.2 percent thought the limit is .01, and 7.9 percent thought the limit is .05.
Three other questions were included to determine Texas drivers’ knowledge level with respect to several traffic safety related laws. Multiple responses were allowed for a question regarding cell phone use in school zones. Each of the response choices is correct, so the table indicates the frequencies with which choices were selected. The most common aspect of the law with which drivers in Texas are aware is that cell phone use is banned in all school zones.

**Table 5. Cell Phone Use in School Zones**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banned in all Texas school zones</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands-free allowed</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement decided by each school district</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banned where posted</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the three law-related issues, respondents were most unsure of the restrictions for cell phone use among teens with a graduate driver license (GDL). The chart shows that over 53.2 percent checked the Not Sure response and one-third selected the correct response—cell phone use is not allowed for persons driving with a GDL license.
Figure 18. Cell Phone Use by Graduated Licensed Drivers

What is the current law in Texas on use of cell phones by teens with a Graduated Driver License (GDL)?

- 53.2%: Cell phone use is not allowed for persons driving with a GDL license.
- 33.1%: Cell phones allowed for drivers with a GDL license except in school zones.
- 8.0%: Cell phones allowed after 3 months of driving with a GDL and no citations.
- 3.7%: Cell phones are not allowed for any driver under 21.
- 2.0%: Not Sure

Figure 19 depicts the breakdown of responses to the question regarding the seat belt law in Texas. The Texas mandatory seat belt law was amended in September, 2009 to include all occupants in all seating positions. Survey results indicate the public is very aware of the current requirements, as evidenced by the correct response by 84.3 percent of the respondents and a Not Sure response by only 7.1 percent of those surveyed.

Figure 19. Texas Seat belt Law

What is the current law in Texas for seat belt use?

- 84.3%: Every person in vehicle required to use seatbelts
- 7.1%: Only front seat driver and passengers required to use seatbelts
- 3.8%: Anyone in the front seat under 15 is required to use seatbelts
- 3.8%: Seatbelt use is optional in Texas
- 1.0%: Not Sure
Respondents were asked how often they had done a variety of behaviors related to traffic safety. Table 5 provides the percentages for each of the responses. Judging from these responses, the most taboo behavior among the list is to drive without a seat belt, followed closely by failing to stop at a stop sign. The most widely reported behavior was using a cell phone while driving. Texting regularly was reported by almost six percent of drivers and texting sometimes by another 15.3 percent.

Table 5. Driving Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the past 30 days, how often have you done the following?</th>
<th>% Regularly</th>
<th>% Sometimes</th>
<th>% Rarely</th>
<th>% Just Once</th>
<th>% Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driven without using seat belt</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>79.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed other people to ride in your car without using seat belt</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>7.73</td>
<td>13.17</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>74.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridden as a passenger without using seat belt</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>12.81</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>72.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven 15mph over the speed limit on a freeway/highway</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>12.06</td>
<td>19.99</td>
<td>6.03</td>
<td>58.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven 15mph over the speed limit on a residential street</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>15.68</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>73.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailgated another driver when could have backed off</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>17.49</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>68.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven through a light just turned red when could have stopped</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>19.18</td>
<td>10.85</td>
<td>62.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven through a stop sign</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>10.27</td>
<td>9.02</td>
<td>77.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven while very sleepy</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>13.27</td>
<td>23.58</td>
<td>8.88</td>
<td>52.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven while very tired</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>16.19</td>
<td>28.00</td>
<td>9.62</td>
<td>42.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talked on cell phone while driving</td>
<td>14.07</td>
<td>30.06</td>
<td>20.43</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>30.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read or sent text message while driving</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>15.26</td>
<td>19.65</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>53.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drivers were also asked how they viewed the actions of others in terms of being a threat to their safety. Questions and response percentages are provided in Table 6. Drinking and
driving, running red lights, driver inattention, and drivers texting or emailing were viewed as the most serious threats to safety.

**Table 6. Threats to Safety**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you think the following are a threat to your personal safety?</th>
<th>% Very Serious Threat</th>
<th>% Somewhat Serious Threat</th>
<th>% Minor Threat</th>
<th>% Not A Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People driving well over the speed limit</td>
<td>63.49</td>
<td>28.22</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People driving aggressively</td>
<td>75.89</td>
<td>20.48</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers talking on cell phones</td>
<td>58.57</td>
<td>31.36</td>
<td>8.72</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers not paying attention</td>
<td>82.04</td>
<td>15.61</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People driving after drinking alcohol</td>
<td>89.99</td>
<td>7.99</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People driving when they’re too sleepy</td>
<td>65.02</td>
<td>28.93</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers text messaging or emailing</td>
<td>81.62</td>
<td>14.17</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers running red lights</td>
<td>84.47</td>
<td>12.44</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People driving well under the speed limit</td>
<td>36.96</td>
<td>34.81</td>
<td>22.99</td>
<td>5.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2011 RESULTS COMPARED TO 2010 RESULTS**

- A significantly larger number of respondents in 2011 said they had read, seen or heard something about alcohol impaired driving (or drunk driving) enforcement by police in the past 30 days (75.1 percent in 2011 compared to 71.6 percent in 2010).

- Fewer respondents said they drink and drive this year. However, of those who said they had, a higher number reported frequent behavior (5 or more times in the past 60 days).

- Perception of impaired driving enforcement was slightly higher this year—93.3 percent compared to 92.2 percent who thought it likely to be arrested if driving impaired.
• While the percent of people opposed to sobriety checkpoints remained the same, fewer people favored them, and more people had a neutral opinion on the subject in 2011.

• Alternative choices to driving impaired ranked about the same both years, with letting someone who has not been drinking as the most preferred choice and driving anyway as the last choice.

• Self-reported seat belt use declined slightly in 2011 – 1.4 percent said they seldom or never use seat belts compared to 0.9 percent in 2010.

• Awareness of seat belt enforcement declined significantly in 2011, from 72.7 percent reporting they had heard about enforcement in the past 60 days in 2010 to 66.2 percent reporting the same in 2011, a 6.5 percentage point drop. Similarly, fewer people thought the likelihood of seat belt non-use would result in a ticket (87.9 percent in 2011 compared to 89.7 percent in 2010).

• The degree to which drivers report speeding and likelihood of a ticket remained consistent with last year’s results. Those who said they only sometimes and rarely exceed the limit by 5 mph on 70 mph roads decreased significantly from last year.

• A larger percentage of Texans are aware this year of the ban on cell phone use in school zones, as seen by the increase of 9.1 percentage points checking this response. Other aspects of the ban are still not very well known, and the percent who checked they were not sure of the law remained the same as last year.

• The cell phone use restriction for drivers with a Graduated Driver License (GDL) continues to be somewhat unclear for a majority of survey respondents. Over 50 percent both years checked the Not Sure response when given choices as to how the restrictions are applied.

• In 2010 and 2011 the survey showed that Texans were very aware that the seat belt requirement pertains to every occupant, with 84 percent answering correctly each year.

• In both years, respondents were asked how often they had done 12 different behaviors during the past 30 days. The three behaviors with the highest percentage of respondents reporting they had never done were consistent both years: driven without a seat belt, driven through a stop sign, and allowed passengers to ride with them unbelted. However, the fourth and fifth highest ranked behaviors traded places this year, with riding as a passenger unbuckled falling behind speeding in a residential area.

• In terms of what respondents thought was most threatening to their safety, Texans in both years consider impaired drivers the most serious threat. Running red lights and not paying attention were 2nd and 3rd. In contrast to 2010, this year text messaging or emailing fell below aggressive driving as a safety threat.
The following graphs summarize the results of the 2010 and 2011 surveys for the 10 core questions. Statistically significant changes are noted.

**In the past 60 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about seat belt law enforcement by police?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Red numbers indicate a significant change from last year.

**What do you think the chances are of getting a ticket if you don't wear your seat belt?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How often do you use seat belts when you drive or ride in a car, van, SUV or pickup?

![Bar chart showing seat belt usage]

On a local road with a speed limit of 30 mph, how often do you drive faster than 35 mph?

![Bar chart showing driving speed]

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**How often do you use seat belts when you drive or ride in a car, van, SUV or pickup?**

- **Always**: 96.7% (2010) vs. 96.5% (2011)
- **Sometimes**: 2.8% (2010) vs. 2.8% (2011)
- **Never**: 0.4% (2010) vs. 0.7% (2011)

**On a local road with a speed limit of 30 mph, how often do you drive faster than 35 mph?**

- **Most of the time**: 9.0% (2010) vs. 8.4% (2011)
- **About half the time**: 12.1% (2010) vs. 11.7% (2011)
- **Sometimes & Rarely**: 62.6% (2010) vs. 62.2% (2011)
- **Never**: 16.3% (2010) vs. 17.6% (2011)
On a road with a speed limit of 70 mph, how often do you drive faster than 75 mph?

In the past 30 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about speed enforcement by police?
What do you think the chances are of getting a ticket if you drive over the speed limit?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of likely and unlikely outcomes in 2010 and 2011.]

In the past 30 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about alcohol impaired driving (or drunk driving) enforcement by police?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of responses in 2010 and 2011.]

Red numbers indicate a significant change from last year.
What do you think the chances are of someone getting arrested if they drive after drinking?

In the past 60 days, how many times have you driven a motor vehicle within 2 hours after drinking alcoholic beverages?
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- Impaired driving and seat belt enforcement campaign messages are seen and heard by a majority of Texas drivers.

- Most Texas drivers believe it is very likely that impaired drivers will be arrested.

- Over 96 percent of respondents reported they always or nearly always use their seat belt.

- A smaller percentage of respondents this year were aware of increased enforcement of the seat belt law within the past 60 days.

- Almost half of drivers surveyed (49.8 percent) reported exceeding local speed limits by 5mph sometimes or more frequently. About 40 percent reported exceeding 70mph speed limits by 5mph sometimes or more frequently.

- Over half of Texans surveyed (55.6 percent) are in favor of sobriety checkpoints. Twenty-one percent are neutral, and 23.1 percent are opposed to sobriety checkpoints.

- Impaired drivers rely on others—friend or family member or someone who has not been drinking—for transportation home more so than public transportation or other means of transportation.

- Impaired drivers say they have driven impaired most often because they had no other way to get home and because they were close to home.

- Only 52.8 percent of those surveyed knew the legal BAC limit for intoxication in Texas. Almost 30 percent said they were not sure.

- A larger percent of respondents this year had heard of impaired driving enforcement efforts.

- The seat belt law is well known. Eighty-four percent were familiar with the current requirements.

- Drivers are far less familiar with the specifics of cell phone use restrictions in school zones and with regard to GDL.

- Self-reported cell phone use among drivers is common relative to other traffic safety risk behaviors. Fourteen percent of drivers reported regular cell phone use while driving.

- Almost six percent of drivers reported regularly texting while driving in the past 30 days.

- The behavior viewed most often as a serious threat to personal safety is impaired driving.
APPENDIX A: Questionnaire

This survey is being done for the Texas Department of Transportation to find out Texans’ views on traffic safety issues. Your answers to the following questions are voluntary and anonymous. Thank you for taking time to participate.

1. What type of vehicle do you drive most often?
   - None, I do not drive.
   - Passenger Car
   - Pickup
   - SUV
   - Van
   - Motorcycle
   - Other

2. In the past 60 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about seat belt law enforcement by police?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not Sure

3. What do you think the chances are of getting a ticket if you don't wear your seat belt?
   - Very Likely
   - Somewhat Likely
   - Likely
   - Unlikely
   - Very Unlikely

4. How often do you use seat belts when you drive or ride in a car, van, SUV or pickup?
   - Always
   - Nearly Always
   - Sometimes
   - Seldom
   - Never

5. On a local road with a speed limit of 30 mph, how often do you drive faster than 35 mph?
   - Most of the time
   - About half of the time
   - Sometimes
   - Rarely
   - Never

6. On a road with a speed limit of 70 mph, how often do you drive faster than 75 mph?
   - Most of the time
   - About half of the time
   - Sometimes
   - Rarely
   - Never

7. In the past 30 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about speed enforcement by police?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not Sure

8. What do you think the chances are of getting a ticket if you drive over the speed limit?
   - Very Likely
   - Somewhat Likely
   - Likely
   - Unlikely
   - Very Unlikely

9. In the past 30 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about alcohol impaired driving (or drunk driving) enforcement by police?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not Sure

10. What do you think the chances are of someone getting arrested if they drive after drinking?
    - Very Likely
    - Somewhat Likely
    - Likely
    - Unlikely
    - Very Unlikely

11. Are you in favor of or opposed to sobriety checkpoints (where drivers are stopped briefly by police to check for alcohol impaired driving)?
    - Strongly Favor
    - Favor
    - Feel Neutral
    - Oppose
    - Strongly Oppose

12. In Texas, you are legally intoxicated when your Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) is?
    - .01
    - .05
    - .08
    - 1.20
    - 1.50
    - 2.00
    - Not Sure

13. In the past 60 days, how many times have you driven a motor vehicle within 2 hours after drinking alcoholic beverages?
    - Number of times
    - None, I do not drink
    - None, I do not drink & drive

14. Do you ever drive after drinking more than you should have?
    - No
    - Very Rarely
    - Sometimes
    - Frequently
    - Very Frequently

15. Why have you driven after drinking too much? [Check all that apply.]
    - Had no other way to get home.
    - Didn’t designate a driver ahead of time.
    - I was close to home.
    - Thought I was ok/not drunk at the time.
    - I believe I'm a good driver after drinking.
    - Had other people with me that I had to take home/somewhere.
    - Didn't want to leave my car/vehicle.
    - Was in a hurry.
    - Wanted to go to multiple other places before going home (other bars, parties, etc.)
    - Don't remember making the choice.
    - Never even thought about it.
    - Other. Please specify: ____________________________________________

Please Turn Over
16. When you think you’ve had too much to drink and you need to get home, what are some things you do regularly? [Check all that apply.]
- I don’t drink.
- Take a cab.
- Take public transportation.
- Stay at my location until I’m sober enough to drive.
- Call a friend or family member to give me a ride.
- Walk.
- Let someone who hasn’t been drinking drive me home.
- Let someone who has had less to drink than me drive me home.
- Drive anyway.
- Other, please specify: ____________________________________________________________

17. In the past 30 days, how often have you done the following? Have you done it regularly, sometimes, rarely, just once, or never?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Just Once</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driven without using your seatbelt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed other people to ride in your car without using their seatbelt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridden as a passenger without using your seatbelt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven 15 mph over the speed limit on a freeway or highway</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven 15 mph over the speed limit on a residential street</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailgated another driver when you could have backed off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven through a light just turned red when you could have stopped</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven through a stop sign</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven when you were feeling very sleepy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven when you were feeling very tired</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talked on your cell phone while you were driving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read or sent a text message or email while you were driving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. What is the current law in Texas on use of cell phones in school zones? [Check all that apply.]
- Cell phone use is banned in all Texas school zones.
- Hands-free cell phone use is allowed in school zones.
- Enforcement of cell phone use is decided by each city or county.
- Cell phone use is banned in school zones where signs are posted indicating the ban.
- Not Sure

19. What is the current law in Texas on use of cell phones by teens with a Graduated Driver License (GDL)?
- Cell phone use is not allowed for persons driving with a GDL license.
- Cell phone use is allowed for persons driving with a GDL license except in school zones.
- Cell phone use is allowed after a three-month period of driving with a GDL license and no citations.
- Cell phone use is not allowed for persons under 21 years old regardless of their type of license.
- Not Sure

20. What is the current law in Texas for seat belt use?
- Every person in vehicle required to use seat belts
- Only front seat driver and passengers required to use seat belts
- Front seat drivers and passengers who are under age 15 are required to use seat belts
- Seat belt use is optional in Texas
- Not Sure

21. Do you think the following are a very serious threat, a somewhat serious threat, a minor threat, or not a threat to your personal safety?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Very Serious Threat</th>
<th>Somewhat Serious Threat</th>
<th>Minor Threat</th>
<th>Not a Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People driving well over the speed limit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People driving aggressively</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers talking on cell phones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers not paying attention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People driving after drinking alcohol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People driving when they’re too sleepy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers text messaging or emailing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers running red lights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People driving well under the speed limit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. What is your age?
- □ 18-21
- □ 22-30
- □ 31-45
- □ 46-65
- □ Over 65

23. What is your race/ethnicity?
- □ White
- □ Black
- □ Hispanic
- □ Asian
- □ Other

24. What is your zip code? _________________________

25. What is your gender?
- □ Male
- □ Female
Introduction
The purpose of this form is to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research.

You have been asked to participate in a survey about traffic safety issues. The purpose of this study is to collect information about Texans’ awareness, knowledge, and opinions of various traffic safety issues. You were randomly selected to be a possible participant because you are conducting business or are with someone conducting business in a driver license office today where the survey is taking place. This study is being sponsored/funded by the Texas Department of Transportation.

What will I be asked to do?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to provide answers to 25 questions. This should take less than 10 minutes. You may not participate in the survey if you are under 18 years of age.

What are the risks involved in this study?
The risks associated with this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. The survey is not related in any way to your driver license or record or any action related to the Department of Public Safety.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study.

Do I have to participate?
No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or leave any questions blank without your current or future relations with Texas A&M University, TxDOT, or DPS being affected.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?
This study is anonymous. We are not asking for any identifiers that could be associated with you.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Katie Womack at (979) 845-5153 or kwomack@tamu.edu.

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?
This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Participation
Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. If you would like to participate in the survey, please take a form, complete it, and return to the TTI surveyor. Thank you.