



For immediate release

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CAA urging motorists to stop talking/texting while driving before law kicks in

Thornhill, ON – CAA South Central Ontario (CAASCO) is urging motorists to start getting used to paying attention to the road while driving. Ontario will join Quebec, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and hundreds of cities globally banning the use of a hand-held electronic device while driving as of October 26, 2009 however police will not begin issuing tickets until February 1, 2010.

CAA has been at the forefront urging for distracted driving legislation and is happy to see this new law soon come into affect. Our members have been very vocal about this issue and we are glad to see the Ontario government answer their call. Drivers should reduce the urge to use any electronic device while in motion or engage in any distracting activity.

What will not be allowed?

- Driving a motor vehicle while viewing screens on laptops or DVD players.
- Driving a motor vehicle on a highway while holding or using a hand-held wireless communication device like a cellphone, iPhone or BlackBerry for the purpose of texting/e-mailing or talking.

What is allowed?

- Drivers can use a cell phone with an earpiece, headset, or Bluetooth device using voice dialing.
- Drivers can have a gps unit as long as it is mounted on the dashboard.
- Using a portable media player (eg.iPod) plugged into the sound system as long as it is mounted on the dashboard.

The law does not apply to:

- Passengers in the front or back seat
- Drivers in vehicles pulled off the roadway or lawfully parked
- 911 calls
- Pressing the button of a hand-held device to activate the hands-free mode

Remember, when driving a vehicle, road safety is your first responsibility. The following are some tips to help reduce driver distraction.

- Make it a habit to use your cell phone only when parked.
- Put your phone on voicemail before entering your vehicle. Return calls when you are stopped at a safe location.
- Plan for a safe location to stop (for example a rest stop or commuter lot) to make and receive calls or have passengers take calls.
- Avoid long social calls. Keep conversations short.
- Never, never text, tweet, or check or write e-mail and drive!

CAA South Central Ontario is a not-for-profit auto club offering insurance, travel and roadside services. There are more than 1.8 million CAA members in South Central Ontario and 5 million members in Canada.

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