

# INFORMATION RELEASE



## Office of the Director

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### **MOTORISTS REMINDED TO OBEY NEW CELL PHONE LAWS WHILE TRAVELING ARKANSAS' HIGHWAYS**

**LITTLE ROCK (8-10)** – Officials with the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department are reminding motorists to be aware of new cell phone laws this summer and in the months ahead as they travel Arkansas' highways.

“Act 37 of 2011 makes it illegal to use handheld cell phones in highway work zones and in school zones,” states AHTD Director Scott Bennett. “In the weeks and months ahead, motorists will encounter added activities along our state's highways and will need to pay extra attention to their driving.”

“Schools across the state will open their doors later this month,” Bennett adds. “It's important that motorists watch for students in school zones and give their full attention to what is happening around them as students make their way to classes.”

The same cautionary advice applies for motorists traveling through construction zones on the state's highways.

“Later this year, motorists will start seeing an increase in the number of construction zones on the state's Interstates as the Interstate Rehabilitation Program gets underway,” Bennett states.

“We urge motorists to use extreme caution when traveling through construction zones and ask they not use their handheld cell phones while driving,” Bennett advises.

Reconstruction of over 400 miles of Interstate highways in the state is scheduled with the new rehabilitation program. Approximately 85 improvement projects are planned, with the first to begin in November. Motorists can expect lane shifts and/or lane closures at each project location.

“Be aware what is going on in construction zones by watching for workers and heavy equipment,” Bennett warns.

(more)

“We also want to remind motorists that the November election ballot will include a half-cent state sales tax proposal that could also mean extra construction activity on Arkansas’ highways,” Bennett stated.

If passed by voters at the ballot box, another \$1.8 billion in highway improvement projects will be scheduled to create or improve four lane highways in the state.

“Arkansas motorists can do their part to make our highways a safer place by remembering these new laws prohibiting handheld cell phone use in school and construction zones,” Bennett concludes.

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