Committed to Traffic Safety

The Texas A&M Transportation Institute’s (TTI) Center for Transportation Safety (CTS) was established in 2001 by the Texas Legislature. The mission of the CTS is to serve as a focal point for traffic safety research, policy analysis, education and outreach in Texas. CTS researchers pursue this mission by:

- **Conducting research** to reduce the deaths and injuries associated with transportation in all its modes;
- **Promoting the collaboration** of professionals from different disciplines in the cause of transportation safety;
- **Assessing the effectiveness** of different plans, programs and policies that have been implemented to reduce transportation-related deaths and injuries;
- **Serving as a resource** to the legislature and various state agencies by developing new plans, programs and policies that have the potential to reduce transportation-related deaths and injuries in Texas;
- **Providing students hands-on training** and guidance in transportation safety and safety-related research.

Although the state and nation have seen impressive recent declines in crash fatalities, the number of such deaths remains alarmingly — and unacceptably — high. The CTS is committed to further reducing the injury and death toll on our roadways. The Center consists of professionals from various fields including engineering, education, enforcement and social sciences with specialization in a variety of areas including impaired driving, safety engineering, enforcement, policy, occupant safety and survey research.

**Safety Is What We Do**

CTS researchers have a wide range of knowledge and skills in advancing safety initiatives in transportation. Coming from the public and private sectors, our staff applies both research expertise and real-world experience to meet 21st-century challenges to transportation safety. The Center’s work is focused on developing safer roadways, safer drivers and addressing the needs of high-risk groups.

### Safer roadways
- Traffic signals and signs
- Infrastructure improvements
- Crash analysis
- Planning

### Safer drivers
- Alcohol and drug-impaired driving
- Distracted driving
- Occupant protection
- Traffic safety culture

### High-risk groups
- Motorcyclists
- Pedestrians and bicyclists
- Teen drivers
- Older drivers
Center for Alcohol and Drug Education Studies
The Center for Alcohol and Drug Education Studies (CADES) focuses on solving problems caused by the irresponsible use of alcohol and other drugs. CADES provides education and research related to alcohol and other drugs specifically as they relate to traffic safety. CADES programs include training for attorneys, law enforcement, probation officers and young people. In addition, it engages in research to identify and evaluate approaches to prevent the use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs by various segments of society.

Click It or Ticket
The CTS conducts numerous observational surveys to measure compliance with Texas’ occupant protection laws and to evaluate efforts to increase passenger safety. The Center conducts annual surveys of statewide safety belt use, child safety seat use, and targeted population surveys associated with enforcement and education strategies or high-visibility efforts such as the Click It or Ticket campaign. These surveys provide the quantitative benchmarks to track progress, evaluate programs and provide direction for future efforts in occupant protection.

Enforcement Technology
New research from CTS suggests that red light cameras help reduce the number of crashes at intersections where they are installed. The study, although limited to Texas, is one of the most extensive thus far in the nation, and researchers say the findings demonstrate that the automated enforcement method offers an effective means of preventing crash-related deaths and injuries. Read the full report at http://tti.tamu.edu/cts.

Teen Driver Safety
Teens in the Driver Seat is the nation’s first peer-to-peer safety program by and for young drivers. The program, in partnership with CTS, is sponsored by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), State Farm Insurance, and the Houston-Galveston Area Council. It aims to raise teen driver awareness of risky driving behaviors. The program is credited with helping create an atmosphere for change resulting in a 45 percent decline in fatal crashes involving teen drivers in Texas. In 2011, the TDS program grew to be active in nearly 600 schools in Texas. The program has also spread to nearly 100 schools in other states, including California, Connecticut, Georgia, North Carolina and Montana. For more information visit http://t-driver.com.

Motorcycle Safety
TxDOT’s Traffic Safety Program has funded several projects to continue the downward trend of motorcycle fatalities and continue statewide efforts to improve motorcycle safety. The projects range from increasing driver awareness of motorcycles to expanding educational opportunities for motorcycle training instructors. Center researchers have also created the Texas Motorcycle Safety Coalition that brings together a diverse group of stakeholders interested in motorcycle safety issues. For more information visit http://looklearnlive.org.

Safety Bonds
TxDOT has made safety improvements at hundreds of mostly rural locations across the state through its “safety bonds” program, funded through voter-approved roadway financing authorized by the Texas Legislature. CTS researchers helped TxDOT identify those locations where the most significant crash reductions could be realized. As a result of the TxDOT-TTI teamwork, researchers estimate that nearly 100 crash fatalities and hundreds more crash injuries will be avoided each year for 20 years. In 2009, TxDOT’s safety bonds program earned a National Roadway Safety Award from the Federal Highway Administration and the Roadway Safety Foundation.

Distracted Driving
Researchers at the Center have determined that a driver’s reaction time is doubled when distracted by reading or sending a text message. The study, the first published work in the U.S. to examine texting while driving in an actual driving environment, reveals how the texting impairment is even greater than many experts believed, and demonstrates how texting drivers are less able to react to sudden roadway hazards. For more information visit http://tti.tamu.edu/group/cts/texting-and-driving/.

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TTI’s Mission
To solve transportation problems through research, to transfer technology and to develop diverse human resources to meet the transportation challenges of tomorrow.

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