



# COSTA MESA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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### Costa Mesa Police Department to Hold 'Zero Tolerance' Distracted Driving Enforcement Operation

*Costa Mesa, CA* – As part of this month's *Distracted Driving Awareness Month* campaign, Costa Mesa Police Department will be offering "zero tolerance" to those texting or operating hand-held cell phones on April 13 and April 27, 2011. Drivers who break the law and place themselves and others in danger will be cited. The current minimum ticket cost is \$159, with subsequent tickets costing at least \$279.

Distracted driving is a serious traffic safety concern that puts everyone on the road at risk. As a result, law enforcement across the state, including Costa Mesa are increasingly cracking down on cell phone use and texting. This April will see over 225 local agencies plus the 103 CHP Area Commands conducting zero tolerance enforcements.

Costa Mesa PD is deploying additional traffic officers above regular staffing levels on the following dates:

April 13th  
April 27th

"We take the issue of distracted driving very seriously," said Costa Mesa Police Chief Steve Staveley. "Costa Mesa has already experienced one tragic loss of life in 2010 due to a distracted driver running a red light. If we can prevent further losses through a zero tolerance distracted driving campaign, then I completely support it."

Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. Younger, inexperienced drivers under 20 years old have the highest proportion of distraction-related fatal crashes. In addition, studies show that texting while driving can delay a driver's reaction time just as severely as having a blood alcohol content of a legally drunk driver.

Studies show that there is no difference in the risks between hands-free and hand-held cell phone conversations, both of which can result in "inattention blindness" which occurs when the brain is not seeing what is clearly visible because the drivers' focus is on the phone conversation and not on the road.

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