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TDLR offers holiday driving advice to traveling Texans

AUSTIN – Before you set out on your holiday trip, the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation recommends that you take a few minutes to make sure your vehicle is ready. And while you’re on the road, slow down, pay attention and allow extra time to reach your destination.

Driver safety is important to TDLR because we regulate the Driver Education and Safety program, which oversees Texas driver education, parent-taught driver education and the Drug and Alcohol Awareness Program. We also license tow truck companies and drivers, who you may need to call on if you experience trouble on the road.

Here’s a bit of good news: the TDLR meteorologist, George Bomar, says weather shouldn’t be a factor in your travel plans if you’re staying in Texas.

“As folks travel around Texas over the pre-Christmas weekend, the Grinch will not get in the way, as weather conditions should remain dry right up to Christmas Eve, or even Christmas Day,” Bomar said. “Then, much of central and eastern Texas will see rain for a few days in the middle of next week. Those who wish for a White Christmas will need to wait at least another year. But there is good news in that outlook: That also means no threat of ice, which would make traveling about very treacherous. Arctic air stays away right up through Christmas, as temperatures will be seasonally cool—but not cold.”

Before you leave on your trip:

- Make sure your vehicle’s tires are aired up, that fluids (oil, windshield wiper, antifreeze) are at the proper levels, and that your windshield wipers are fresh.
- Pack an emergency kit with flashlights, blankets, water, snacks and road flares in case you’re suddenly stranded.
- Check the weather on the way. Are there big storms between where you are, and where you’re heading?
- Print out a map of your planned route in case your GPS stops working or isn’t available.

While you’re on the road:

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TDLR Customer Service | (512) 463-6599 | Toll-Free (in Texas) | (800) 803-9202 | Relay Texas-TDD: (800) 735-2989

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- Make sure everyone in the vehicle is buckled in – every trip, every time, no matter where they are in the vehicle.
- Pack your patience – traffic is likely to be heavy, so it may take a bit longer to get to your destination.
- Pay attention – have someone else hold your mobile phone and direct the driving route. A crash can happen in just moments.
- Be aware of road conditions and adjust your speed – if it's raining or snowing, slow down. Wet or slick pavement can change reaction times.
- Avoid road rage – either creating it or falling victim to it. Always keep to the right on the highways unless you're passing another vehicle. Share the Christmas spirit and let someone in front of you.
- Move over – when you see emergency vehicles, including tow trucks, stopped on the side of the road, either decrease your speed by 20 mph or move into the middle lane away from the vehicles. It's safer for everyone and, in Texas, it's the law.
- Keep an eye on gas levels, especially if you're headed into area where the weather is bad. You never know when you might get stuck in the snow, or where that next gas station really is.
- Stop every 1.5 to 2 hours and walk around. Getting a bit of exercise will help you stay alert.
- If you notice you're getting drowsy, stop for a rest. Your body is trying to tell you that it's time to take a break, not that it's time to push on.

About TDLR

TDLR provides regulatory oversight for a broad range of occupations, businesses, facilities, and equipment in Texas. The agency protects the health and safety of Texans by ensuring they are served by qualified, licensed professionals. Inspections of individuals, businesses, and equipment are done on a regular basis to safeguard the public. Currently, the agency regulates 39 business and occupational licensing programs with more than 800,000 licensees across the state.

Visit TDLR's [website](#) for more information and resources. You can search the [TDLR licensee database](#), and also find [past violations](#) in which a final order was issued against companies or individuals. TDLR's Customer Service line is available anytime between 7 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 1-800-803-9202. TDLR representatives are fluent in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese.

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