

ALAMO HEIGHTS POLICE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: September 16, 2009

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Alamo Heights Announces Ban on the Use of Hand-Held Communications Devices in Selected School Crossing Zones

A Plan for Safer School Crossing Zones

[ALAMO HEIGHTS, TX – September 16, 2009] – At their regularly scheduled meeting of September 14, 2009, the Alamo Heights City Council supported a ban on the use of hand-held communications devices in selected school crossing zones. The City Council received a briefing from Police Chief Rick Pruitt who reported that the large volumes of commuter traffic passing through school crossing zones on Broadway created an immediate need to prohibit the use of hand-held communications devices in the 5600-5900 blocks of Broadway adjacent to Cambridge Elementary School and the 6800-7100 blocks of Broadway adjacent to Alamo Heights High School. Chief Pruitt reported he will work with school administrators to determine if additional prohibitions are needed for school crossing zones located on neighborhood streets around schools in Alamo Heights.

House Bill 55, which became effective on September 1, 2009, amended Section 545.425 of the Texas Transportation Code to prohibit the use of hand-held communications devices that use a commercial mobile service while operating a motor vehicle within a school crossing zone unless the motor vehicle is stopped or a hands-free device is used with the wireless communications device.

Signage meeting standards prescribed by the Texas Department of Transportation will be placed at the entrance of each school crossing zone where the use of hand-held communications devices is prohibited to warn motorists of the prohibition and that violators could receive a fine up to \$200.

In separate legislative action, House Bill 339 was passed to amend Section 545.424 of the Texas Transportation Code to prohibit motor vehicle operators under eighteen (18) years of age from using a hand-held communications device except in the case of an emergency.

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