
TxDOT's five goals: reduce congestion • enhance safety • expand economic opportunity
• improve air quality • preserve the value of transportation assets.

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TxDOT Launches Toll Road Safety Campaign

AUSTIN - It happens all too often on Central Texas toll roads: drivers get out of their cars at toll booths; they speed through toll plazas; they back up when they miss an exit or to select a different lane.

In response, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) launched a radio campaign in the Austin area Monday urging motorists to slow down and exercise caution at toll plazas. Campaign messages remind motorists to keep safety in mind by avoiding abrupt lane changes and staying in their vehicle at toll plazas.

Travelers may be unaware that, instead of a costly ticket, drivers passing through a Central Texas toll plaza without a TxTag account or cash payment will simply receive a bill in the mail. Toll rates for the Pay by Mail payment option are slightly higher than cash rates and are subject to an additional nominal administrative fee, but larger fees are only applied if a driver fails to pay a bill after 45 days.

"In a lot of cases, these drivers are simply trying to do the right thing and pay their toll, but we need them to remember that if they cannot safely get to a cash lane or don't have exact change, they should simply drive on through and pay their bill later," said Mark Tomlinson, TxDOT Turnpike Authority Division director. "There's never a reason to risk getting hurt."

TxDOT officials report speeding at toll plazas is another safety concern for motorists, equipment and toll booth operators. Since 2007, there have been approximately 150 accidents on the Central Texas Turnpike System.

"We hope motorists will heed this friendly reminder to slow down when passing through toll plazas," said Tomlinson. "Their safety and the safety of the people working in toll booths is at stake."

Paying electronically is the safest and most convenient way to pay tolls. With a TxTag, tolls are automatically deducted from a prepaid account, and drivers never have to worry about which lane to use. Setting up a TxTag account only takes a few minutes online at www.TxTag.org or by calling 1-888-GoTxTag.

Toll Road Safety Tips

- Slow down in toll plaza cash lanes and on exit ramps.
- Never back up to change lanes on a toll road.
- Don't get out of your vehicle or attempt to walk across lanes.
- If you find yourself in the wrong lane, just keep driving through and you'll get a bill in the mail for your tolls.
- Watch for stopped vehicles in cash lanes.
- Use the non-stop TxTag/Pay By Mail express lanes and avoid toll booth lanes, unless you're paying with cash or getting on or off the roadway.
- When driving through a cash plaza, only travel through lanes marked with a green arrow.
- Avoid driver distractions, such as talking or texting on cell phones, and always buckle up.

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For more information contact TxDOT's Government and Public Affairs Division at (512) 463-8588.