



# Telecommunications Bulletin

## Customer Service Center (CSC)

Volume: CSC 10-14  
December 7, 2009

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Starting January 1, 2010

### **Illinois' New Cell Phone Rules Become Law!**

No more texting while driving or using cell phones in school speed zones

#### Text Messaging Ban

Starting 1/1/10, text messaging while driving becomes an illegal act in the State of Illinois, punishable by fines starting at \$75.00. The law (Public Act 096-0130) says;

*A person may not operate a motor vehicle on a roadway while using an electronic communication device to compose, send or read an electronic message...Electronic message includes, but is not limited to electronic mail, a text message, an instant message or a command or request to access and Internet site.*

The only exceptions to this rule would be in an emergency situation, use by public safety officials and "a driver using an electronic communication device in hands-free or voice activate mode."

#### No Cell Phones in School Zone

Public Act 096-0131 is very specific; "A person, regardless of age, may not use a wireless telephone at any time while operating a motor vehicle on a roadway in a school speed zone."

There are exceptions for a person engaged in a highway construction or maintenance, emergencies and when the phone is in voice-activated mode. This act also goes into effect on 1/1/10.

#### Reminder on Other Miscellaneous Cell-Phone Restrictions

Illinois has current statutes governing cell phone use for teen drivers. Additionally, Illinois is one of six states that allow municipalities to establish their own laws regarding motorists' cellular phone usage. Chicago previously enacted hands-free legislation to make driving while using a cellular phone illegal. As employees travel throughout Illinois, they should investigate similar municipal regulations along their intended routes.

Please make sure to remind all of your staff to be mindful of these driving laws. Let's be careful out there!