



For Immediate Release
Dec. 24, 2009

New Illinois Laws Affect Cell Phone Use While Driving

New laws affecting the use of cellular phones or other electronic devices while driving will be enacted Jan. 1, 2010, local Cellular One representatives point out.

Motorists will be banned from creating, sending or reading text messages, instant messages or emails and from surfing the web while driving. This includes cellular phones, personal digital assistants and portable or mobile computers. Exceptions to this law are made for those reporting emergency situations, on-duty public safety officials, while parked on the shoulder of a road, or if the device is in hands-free or voice-activated mode. Illinois joins 18 other states with laws governing texting and driving.

Another law makes it illegal to talk on a cell phone while driving through a school or highway construction zone. Exceptions to this law are if the person is involved in a highway maintenance or construction project, reporting an emergency situation, an on-duty public safety official, or using the cellular phone in voice-activated mode.

Fines for infractions of these laws reportedly start at \$75.

"Cellular One has always stressed safe driving practices while using cellular phones," said Colleen Wright, Assistant General Manager of Cellular One of East Central Illinois. "We want to be sure our area residents know about these new laws."

"Laws vary from state to state and even within states, so we advise customers to check specifically in the areas in which they travel," Wright said. The requirement for a hands-free device while driving has been in place in Chicago since July of 2005.

More information on these laws is available at the www.cellular1.net under the Cellular News link.