

PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE NEW WASHINGTON STATE CELL PHONE LAWS AND DRIVING

Washington State Text-Messaging Ban started January 1, 2008

Washington State has passed two cell-phone related driving laws for 2008. The first one is EHB 1214 which came into effect on January 1st, 2008, and bans text messaging while driving. Exceptions to this law includes emergency situations or if you're on-duty and work in the area of public safety.

EHB 1214 is a secondary enforcement law. This means you would receive a ticket only if pulled over for another driving violation. This infraction is not placed on your driving record and also doesn't need to be reported.

Washington State Hands-Free Driving Law starts July 1, 2008

The hands-free law (ESSB 5037) goes into effect on July 1, 2008. This new law prohibits the use of a wireless device such as a cell-phone being held to your ear while you are driving. You will still be allowed to use your cell-phone, provided you speak using a hands-free device.

As with text messaging, your cell phone can be used if you are in an emergency or you're reporting an illegal activity. If you have a hearing aid, ESSB 5037 does not apply to you. This hands-free driving law is a secondary enforcement law. You will only receive a ticket for this if you are pulled over for another traffic violation such as speeding or going through a red light. This violation will also not go on your driving record, and employers and insurance companies will receive no information regarding the violation.

From the State of Washington Website:

<http://www.wtsc.wa.gov/research/laws/legislation07.pdf>

Text messaging while driving (EHB 1214): Any driver who uses an electronic wireless communications device to send, read, or write a text message while driving is guilty of a traffic infraction.

However, you do not violate this law if you are entering a telephone number or name in a cell 'phone or if you are operating an emergency vehicle. You would also not be violating this law if you are using this device to report illegal activity or an emergency.

These infractions do not become part of your driving record and they are not given to insurance companies or to employers.

This law is a secondary enforcement law, which means that you may only be given a ticket if you have been pulled over for another traffic violation. The law takes effect January 1, 2008.

Regulating cell phone use while driving (ESSB 5037): Any driver who holds a wireless communications device, like a cell phone, to his ear while driving is guilty of a traffic infraction.

You do not violate this law if you are driving an emergency vehicle or tow truck; if you are talking in hands-free mode; or if you are using the cell phone to report illegal activity or emergencies. The law also does not apply to a person using a hearing aid and does not restrict operation of an amateur radio station.

These infractions do not become part of your driver's record and they are not given to insurance companies or to employers.

This law is a secondary enforcement law, which means that you may only be given a ticket if you have been pulled over for another traffic violation. The law takes effect on July 1, 2008.