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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Third and Final Wave of Sacramento Regional Texting and Handheld Cell Use Campaign Nets 4,143 Citations**

*Phone in One Hand. Ticket in the Other.*

**Sacramento** – June 30 marked the end of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) special demonstration project known as “*Phone in One Hand. Ticket in the Other*,” testing high visibility enforcement of cell phone laws in the greater Sacramento region. The two-week mobilization was the third and final enforcement period which started in November, 2012.

The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), which coordinated the enforcement efforts, announced today that 4,143 drivers were cited for texting or talking with a hand-held cell phone during the last two weeks of June, compared to 3,008 from November 29 to December 9 of last year, and 4,750 tickets from February 25 to March 10 of this year.

“Between this targeted campaign and the statewide campaign in April’s Distracted Driving Awareness Month, no driver in the greater Sacramento area should be unaware of the dangers of cell phone use while driving and law enforcement’s resolve in fighting it,” said Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety.

The “*Phone in One Hand. Ticket in the Other*” campaign was first introduced by NHTSA Administrator David Strickland at a press conference in Sacramento in June of 2012. It is a pilot program bringing together the California Highway Patrol and 37 local police departments from Modesto to Marysville, Vallejo to South Lake Tahoe. OTS was awarded \$600,000 in federal funds for special high visibility law enforcement operations using the region to test tactics that may be employed nationally in the future.

NHTSA researchers have been studying drivers’ cell phone habits in the region before, during and after the enforcements. They will look to see if tactics like this, that have worked well in the past for such things as “*Click It or Ticket*” for seat belt usage, will be successful in pushing down cell phone use while driving.

Distracted drivers talking on a hand-held cell phone or texting receive a first-time ticket costing a minimum of \$161, with a second offense costing \$281. The goal of the special enforcement operation is not to issue citations, but to raise awareness of the dangers of distracted driving and to keep drivers from being distracted by their phones in the first place.

- Turn off your phone and/or put it out of reach
- Include in your outgoing message that you can’t answer while you are driving
- Don’t call or text anyone at a time when you think they may be driving

For more information on distracted driving, please visit [www.distracted.gov/sacramentoregion](http://www.distracted.gov/sacramentoregion).

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