

You can't take it back.



Ohio: Cell Phone Laws, Legislation August 18, 2012

Cell phone, text messaging news: Governor John R. Kasich has signed into law the texting & driving legislation approved by the state Legislature. The ban takes effect Aug. 30, about 90 days after Kasich's signing. A six-month warning period will follow. The new law has two levels of enforcement: There is only secondary enforcement for adult drivers who text message. This means that police need another reason to stop and cite violators, such as weaving or speeding. For drivers under the age of 18, however, texting and use of other portable electronic devices will be a primary offense. Fines for adult violators: \$150. For teen violators, fines top out at \$300 with possible loss of the driver's license. Ohio became the 39th state to ban text messaging while driving. Beachwood is now enforcing its ban on use of handheld electronic devices by all drivers. The ordinance also covers laptop computers. Ticket plus 2 points

against the driver's license: The police chief successfully lobbied for primary enforcement for all violators, regardless of age, saying the pending state law is "too lenient." The Beachwood measure was approved June 18, 2012, a warning period began July 18, and full enforcement went into effect a month later.

Distracted driving: Current prohibitions: A statewide ban on cell phone use and text messaging by all drivers goes into effect in late August 2012. For drivers under the age of 18, texting and use of other portable electronic devices prohibited as of late August 2012. Cleveland, Toledo, Columbus, Parma Heights, Beachwood, Delaware, Belpre, Woodmere, Berea and Zanesville are among the many Ohio cities that have banned text messaging while driving. The new texting law will not override local legislation that calls for stiffer penalties or enforcement.

Ohio distracted driving legislation (2011-2012): House Bill 99:

Would prohibit the driver of a motor vehicle from texting on an electronic wireless communications device. Primary enforcement. Includes streetcars and trolleys. Fines up to \$150. Provides for six-month warning period. Approved by the House Transportation, Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee in a unanimous vote taken March 30, 2011. Approved by the full House in an 88-10 vote taken June 28, 2011. Amended and approved by the Senate Highways and Transportation Committee on May 2, 2012. Approved by the full Senate on May 3 and returned to the House. The House gave final approval on May 15. Latest legislative action: The governor signed the texting measure June 1 and the law takes effect 90 days after that, with a six-month warning period to follow.