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Caltrans “Slow For the Cone Zone” Campaign Targets New Drivers
Statewide campaign encourages teens to test their “Street Skills”

Montclair, CA – Montclair High School is hosting the Caltrans Street Skills Tour to mark National Teen Driver Safety Week on Monday, October 20, 2006.

Car crashes are the leading cause of death among teens age 16 to 19. Teens account for only seven percent of all drivers, yet they're involved in 14 percent of all fatal car crashes. In California alone, nearly 18,000 teen drivers are injured or killed each year.

National Teen Driver Safety Week (Oct. 19 – 26) is a time to focus on ways to help our newest drivers become safer drivers. It is an opportunity to raise awareness of the serious responsibility that goes along with driving and the consequences for those who do not respect traffic laws (and the laws of nature). It also offers an opportunity for traffic safety experts to give teen drivers the information they need to make safer choices.

“Montclair High School was chosen to recognize National Teen Driver Safety Week because it is one of the few high schools in California that still operates a full schedule of driver’s education classes” stated Ray Wolfe, Caltrans District 8 Director for San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Driver’s education classes have increasingly fallen victim to budget cuts in school districts across the state.

Events on campus will include:

- Classroom presentations to all five driver’s education classes.
- A traffic safety fair during both lunch periods, with booths offering safe driving information from a variety of traffic safety experts, including CHP, Caltrans and others.
- Speakers, including students who are taking driver’s education classes; as well as traffic safety experts from California’s Office of Traffic Safety, Caltrans and others.

Caltrans “Street Skills” Campaign

Caltrans has expanded its innovative and educational “Slow for the Cone Zone” efforts with a “Street Skills” campaign to reach teens. It acknowledges the pride teens take in being a good driver, and gives them a chance to “prove” their street skills logging on to SlowForTheConeZone.com where they can watch safety videos and take a safety quiz that will qualify them for a sweepstakes.

Caltrans’ “Slow for the Cone Zone” campaign has taken increasingly innovative approaches this year to reach teens and young adult drivers (earlier this summer, it launched Slow Mo Films, an online entertainment community). It’s important for Caltrans to reach new drivers with safety messages while they’re still learning to drive, and through its pioneer efforts, Caltrans will surely speak the language of teens. Ultimately, Caltrans wants to remind teen drivers to drive safely in cone zones. Basic messages include: slow down; watch for sudden stops or other drivers merging at the last minute; and avoid distractions such as text messaging, eating or changing the radio station.

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New drivers will have a chance to win their own 2009 Toyota Scion XB (donated by Clear Channel and upgraded with tires, wheels, and a high-end sound system!) and \$1,000, which may be used toward auto insurance (donated by campaign partner AAA). No state dollars are being used for the sweepstakes. The grand prize winner will be awarded these prizes at a press conference in December. AAA will also award roadside assistance memberships to 20 lucky runners-up.

Caltrans has sent educational materials to approximately 320 public high school driver's education teachers in California and 600 private driving schools. Kits include safety materials from other partners as well, including CHP, Office of Traffic Safety, MADD, DMV and AAA.

For more information or to enter the New Driver Sweepstakes, please visit www.SlowForTheConeZone.com.

About National Teen Driver Safety Week

National Teen Driver Safety Week was established by Congress in 2007 in response to the more than 5,000 teens that died in teen-driver related crashes on U.S. roads in 2006. The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and State Farm Insurance Companies® played a key role in the designation and continue to support ongoing organizational efforts. Outreach efforts, such as National Teen Driver Safety Week campaigns, are needed so that families going through the learning-to-drive process are supported by their communities. It will take the will and initiative of teens, families, schools, law enforcement officers, and policymakers to successfully address the leading cause of death and acquired disability for US teens.

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