



Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

1000 NW 111 Avenue
Miami, FL 33172-5800

KEVIN J. THIBAUT, P.E.
SECRETARY

For Immediate Release

September 27, 2019

Contact: Tish Burgher

(305) 470-5227

Tish.Burgher@dot.state.fl.us

FDOT District Six Kicks Off Annual “Put it Down” Campaign

Local organizations partner to promote safety message in Miami-Dade, Monroe counties

Miami, Fla. – The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Six announces the launch of its ninth annual “Put it Down” campaign. The campaign serves to inform drivers in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties of the risks of distracted driving and increase awareness of the new Florida law banning texting while driving as a primary offense.

The campaign, which targets drivers between the ages of 16 and 24, will run from October through January, and includes extensive community outreach throughout the region. FDOT has joined forces with numerous educational institutions and other partner agencies and organizations to promote the “Put it Down” safety message.

As of July 1, 2019, Florida motorists can be stopped and cited for texting and driving. The first violation for drivers is a non-moving offense with no points assessed to the driver’s record. The second violation is a moving violation with three points assessed to the driver’s record. In most circumstances, Florida Highway Patrol Troopers will issue warnings for texting and driving through December 31, 2019, to provide drivers with additional education of the new law. Exceptions would apply in extremely dangerous driving situations.

Starting October 1, 2019, wireless communications devices can only be used in a hands-free manner when driving in a designated school crossing, school zone, or active work zone area. Drivers will be issued warnings through December 31, 2019. Starting January 1, 2020, drivers will be cited for using any wireless communication devices in a handheld manner in a work zone or school zone.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2017, at least 3,166 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers, including those who were texting and driving.

“Distracted driving endangers driver, passenger and bystander safety,” said FDOT District Six Secretary Jim Wolfe. “This new law will help to keep our roadways safer. Remember, when you’re behind the wheel, just Put it Down.”

A Public Service Announcement (PSA) promoting the safety message is available and can be accessed using the following link: <https://youtu.be/esjRX2W6UzQ>. The PSA is available in English and Spanish and in 15, 30 and 60-second versions.

For more information, please visit www.fdotmiamidade.com/putitdown or contact the FDOT District Six Community Traffic Safety Coordinator, Carlos Sarmiento, at (305) 470-5437 or via email at Carlos.Sarmiento@dot.state.fl.us. Media outlets interested in additional information or interviews please contact Ivette Ruiz-Paz, at (305) 470-5225 or via email at Ivette.Ruiz-Paz@dot.state.fl.us.

###

***Florida Department of Transportation
Safety, Mobility, Reliability***

www.fdot.gov