



### Road Wise AK Campaign Highlights Screen Device Law

Starting February 1, 2009, The Bureau of Highway Patrol (BHP) begins a new installment of the Road Wise AK Campaign to educate the public on the Screen Device Law.

The Campaign kicks off with a Public Safety Announcement outlining, according to state law, what actions a driver can and cannot take involving electronic devices while driving on Alaska roads. While drivers can view a mobile phone's screen display with caller ID information on it, it is illegal to view the phone to read or create text messages. BHP recommends that drivers who wish to use the text message function on their phone pull over to a safe location, such as a highway pull out or a parking lot, and to put their vehicle in park. It is illegal to text while stopped at traffic light or a stop sign.



For nearly 40 years it has been illegal for a vehicle in the state of Alaska to be equipped with a monitor viewable from the driver's seat regardless of its operational status. The Screen Device Law is an addition to this older administrative code as technological advances have provided drivers with many more distractions which impedes their ability to safely operate their vehicles. AST warns the public that administrative code also prohibits drivers from using any form of head gear that reduces their ability to hear, such as ear phones or headsets used in conjunction with iPods, etc.

To view the new PSA, go to <http://www.youtube.com/user/asthwsads> or RWA Visual Display Law 09 (.wmv)

Below is a segment of the Screen Device Law which came into affect September 1, 2008 and Administrative code AAC 04.260:

Sec. 28.35.161 Driving a motor vehicle with a screen device operating; unlawful installation of television, monitor, or similar device (a) A person commits the crime of driving with a screen device operating if

- (1) the person is driving a motor vehicle;
- (2) the vehicle has a television, video monitor, portable computer, or any other similar means capable of providing a visual display that is in full view of a driver in a normal driving position while the vehicle is in motion; and
- (3) the monitor or visual display is operating while the person is driving.

(b) A person may not install or alter equipment described in (a)(2) of this section that allows the images to be viewed by the driver in a normal driving position while the vehicle is in motion.

(c) Subsections (a) and (b) of this section do not apply to

- (1) portable cellular telephones or personal data assistants being used for verbal communication or displaying caller identification information

13 AAC 04.260. Television receivers and headsets (a) A motor vehicle driven in this state may not be equipped with television-type receiving equipment located where the viewer or screen is visible from the driver's seat.

(b) A driver of a motor vehicle may not wear a headset, headphones, or other headgear designed for receiving sound and transmitting sound to the driver, or wear ear plugs or a similar device which reduces the driver's hearing ability while driving a vehicle.

(c) This section does not prohibit the use of television-type or headgear-receiving equipment used exclusively for safety or law enforcement purposes, used for and designed to improve a driver's hearing ability, or navigational devices such as Global Positioning System (GPS) or Loran.

If you have any questions, please call Megan Peters, PIO for the Department of Public Safety, at 269-5413.

