



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

PRESS RELEASE

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Campaign Encourages North Texans to Bike, Walk and Drive Safely

21 tips can help people look out for one another on region's roads

Nov. 3, 2015 (Arlington, Texas) – Starting this fall, North Texans will see advertising and messaging for Look Out Texans, a regional public education and outreach campaign encouraging people to bike, walk and drive safely together. The campaign highlights 21 tips to keep people safe and features North Texans sharing their stories about the importance of looking out for others on the road.

The campaign was selected for funding by the Regional Transportation Council, and the \$690,000 was part of the Texas Department of Transportation Enhancement Program. It comes at a time when motor vehicle crashes that involve people bicycling and walking are increasing in North Texas. Between 2010 and 2014, there were more than 8,200 such crashes reported, resulting in more than 500 fatalities, according to the Texas Department of Transportation. Consequently, the Federal Highway Administration has designated both Dallas and Fort Worth as two of its 35 Pedestrian-Bicycle Focus Cities, which are selected based on high rates of bicycle and pedestrian crash fatalities.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments is coordinating the regional safety campaign for cities and transportation partners across the region. Using billboards, transit ads, radio ads, online and print advertising, social media and newsletters, the Look Out Texans campaign will reach people across multiple platforms.

The campaign prominently features 21 safety tips to help people understand how bicyclists, walkers and drivers should interact together to improve safety for all people using area roads. For example, people bicycling should follow the same traffic rules as vehicles, ride in the same direction as traffic, always stop at traffic signals and stop signs and use hand signals to notify others of maneuvers like turning, changing lanes and stopping.

People walking must be alert and visible. Pedestrians should always cross streets at crosswalks and intersections where they can gauge traffic and be visible. Before crossing, eye contact with drivers ensures they were seen. Crossing at unmarked areas, between parked cars or between vehicles stopped at a traffic signal is not safe because motorists may not see pedestrians.

For people driving, it is necessary to allow at least three feet when passing someone on a bicycle. State law allows bicyclists to ride on roadways and use the middle of a lane. Drivers must also look out for people walking, always yielding to crossing pedestrians. Drivers should remember that people walking, bicycling and driving in North Texas are their neighbors and friends.

Learning how to walk and bike safely is especially important for children. Planned school outreach will begin later this year and complement the efforts of other campaigns to promote safe walking and bicycling for children. For example, this year 72 local elementary and middle schools registered events to participate in Walk to School Day on Oct. 7. Growing interest in walking and bicycling among people of all ages demonstrates the need for safety education.

These efforts enhance the work of local, state and federal transportation partners who are focused on improving safety for all road users through roadway design solutions and greater awareness of how people can bike, walk and drive safely. Recently, training workshops coordinated by NCTCOG have been helping agencies understand how to design safe infrastructure for people walking.

To see all 21 safety tips that will be highlighted around the region and learn more about the Look Out Texans campaign, visit www.LookOutTexans.org. Follow the campaign on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using #LookOutTexans.

About the North Central Texas Council of Governments:

NCTCOG is a voluntary association of local governments established in 1966 to assist local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. NCTCOG's purpose is to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication and make joint decisions.

NCTCOG serves a 16-county region of North Central Texas, which is centered on the two urban centers of Dallas and Fort Worth. Currently, NCTCOG has 238 member governments including 16 counties, 169 cities, 22 school districts and 31 special districts. For more information on the NCTCOG Transportation Department, visit NCTCOG.org/trans.

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