

Rice poll finds Harris County voters would support ban on texting while driving

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Credit: distraction.gov

Eighty-eight percent of Harris County likely voters would support a Texas state law to ban texting while driving, according to a new poll conducted by Rice University's Center for Civic Leadership.

The [poll](#) found that only 10 percent would oppose a ban. The poll was overseen by Rice political scientist Bob Stein and prepared for KHOU-TV and KUHF-FM as part of a series of studies announced this week.

"It appears clear as day that Harris County residents would support a ban on texting while driving," Stein said. "The prevailing attitude in Harris County appears to mirror the national growing trend of adopting legislation."

According to the Governor's Highway Safety Association, 41 states,

Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands ban text messaging for all drivers. The state of Washington was the first to [ban](#) texting while [driving](#); its state law took effect in 2007.

The use of text messaging has increased dramatically over the past decade. As of December 2012, more than 171 billion text messages per month were sent in the U.S., according to CTIA The Wireless Association, an international nonprofit membership organization that represents the wireless communications industry.

The Pew Internet and American Life Project found that text messaging is the most common nonvoice application Americans use on their mobile phones. Some 73 percent of adult cell owners use the text-messaging function on their phone at least occasionally. The Pew study also found that young adults text significantly more than all other demographic groups, with 18- to 29-year-olds sending or receiving an average of nearly 88 text messages per day.

The Rice poll, conducted Sept. 11-20, included 650 Harris County residents and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.8 percent. The University of Houston Center for Public Policy Survey Research Institute assisted with the research.

Provided by Rice University

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