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California Passes Cell Phone Law

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has signed legislation that prohibits the use of handheld mobile phones while driving in the state.

Effective July 1, 2008, the legislation prohibits drivers from using a wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle unless the driver uses a hands-free device. Drivers who violate the law will face a base fine of \$20 for a first offense and \$50 for each subsequent offense.

The law allows drivers to use a wireless telephone for emergency purposes, drivers of commercial vehicles to use push-to-talk phones until July 1, 2011, and allow drivers of emergency response vehicles to use a cell phone without a hands-free device.

California joins Connecticut, the District of Columbia, New Jersey, New York, and some local jurisdictions in prohibiting the use of handheld mobile phones while driving.

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