

SAFETY TIP OF THE WEEK

California 2017 Safety Laws

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- 898 new California laws will go into effect in 2017. Some of the new laws will impact motorist motorcyclists and gun owners .

- Cellphones use while driving:** Existing law prohibits a person from driving a motor vehicle while using an electronic wireless communications device to write, send, or read a text-based communication, as defined, unless the electronic wireless communications device is specifically designed and configured, and is used, to allow voice-operated and hands-free operation, as specified. A violation of these provisions is an infraction. Assembly Bill No. 1785 would instead prohibit a person from driving a motor vehicle while holding and operating a handheld wireless telephone or a wireless electronic communication device, as defined. The bill would authorize a driver to operate a handheld wireless telephone or a wireless electronic communications device in a manner requiring the use of the driver's hand only under specified conditions. By changing the definition of a crime, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

- Motorcycle lane splitting:** California is the only state to allow lane-splitting, and motorcyclists worried that authorities would someday begin ticketing drivers if the practice were not specifically mentioned in state law. Lane splitting is defined as driving a two-wheeled motorcycle between rows of stopped or moving vehicles in the same lane. The law allows the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to develop education guidelines in a way that ensures the safety of motorcyclists, drivers and passengers. The CHP guidelines advised motorcyclists to travel no more than 10 mph faster than traffic and to only do it when surrounding vehicles were traveling at 30 mph or less, among other suggestions.



NEW GUN SAFETY LAWS

- Assault weapons:** Passage of Proposition 63 calls for a ban on large-capacity ammunition magazines; background checks for ammunition sales and speeding the seizure of firearms from people who are no longer allowed to own them. The measure requires Californians who own gun magazines with more than 10 rounds to give them up starting July 1. Buyers must undergo a background check before buying ammunition and will be barred from buying new weapons that have a bullet button, which were developed by gun manufacturers to get around the state's assault weapons ban. A bullet button allows a shooter to quickly dislodge the magazine using the tip of a bullet.

- Law enforcement officers' handgun storage:** Law enforcement officers will be required to follow the same rules as civilians by securely storing handguns in a lockbox out of plain view or in the trunk if weapons are left in an unattended vehicle. Senate Bill 869 closes a legal loophole and was authored after stolen guns were used in several crimes throughout California.

- Child safety seats (Assembly Bill 53)**

Children under two years of age must ride rear-facing in an appropriate child passenger safety seat. Children weighing 40 or more pounds, or standing 40 or more inches tall, are exempt.

- Driving under the influence: Ignition Interlock Device (SB 1046)** This law requires a driving under the influence (DUI) offender to install an ignition interlock device (IID) on their vehicle for a specified period of time in order to get a restricted driver license or to reinstate their license.

- School Bus Safety : Child Alert System (SB 1072)** This law requires all school buses, school pupil activity buses, youth buses, and child care motor vehicles used to transport school-age children to be equipped with a "child safety alert system. This bill would require that plan to include procedures to ensure that a pupil is not left unattended on a school bus, school pupil activity bus, or youth bus, and procedures and standards for designating an adult chaperone, other than the driver, to accompany pupils on a school pupil activity bus. The bill would additionally require a charter school to prepare this plan.

- Powdered alcohol:** Alcohol in a powder form will be illegal to possess, sell, make or use, per SB 819. Powdered alcohol includes spirits, liquor, wine, beer and every other liquid that can be combined with water or any other liquid, but it does not include vaporized alcohol.

- Businesses and EpiPens:** Under Assembly Bill 1386, businesses can stock EpiPens in case there is a need to treat people suffering from life-threatening allergic reactions. The law allows pharmacies to give the devices to colleges, private businesses and other venues that have a plan in place for using them