THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

NEWS RELEASE

Police Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEW WIRELESS PHONE LAW BEGINS JULY 1

(San Diego) On July 1, 2008 the new wireless phone laws will take effect in California. There are two laws which address the use of wireless phones while driving. The first law prohibits all drivers from using a handheld wireless phone while operating a motor vehicle (California Vehicle Code section 23123). Section 23123 allows motorists 18 and over to use a hands-free device but Section 23124 says that drivers under the age of 18 may not use a cell phone or hands-free device while operating a motor vehicle.

The San Diego Police Department will allow a 30-day grace period; thus we will begin issuing citations on these violations beginning August 1, 2008.

Additional details about the new laws include:

- Drivers can make emergency calls to emergency service agencies even if they do not have a hands-free device
- A minimum fine for the first offense (in San Diego County) is $97 and a second offense is $211
- Other law enforcement agencies in our county may or may not exercise a grace period
- These laws apply to anyone driving in the state of California; passengers are not affected
- The speaker function of your wireless phone is acceptable to use as a hands-free device
- Push-to-talk type phones are not acceptable to use under these laws
- It is acceptable to dial a cell phone but it is not recommended that drivers dial while driving
- If you are cited for either of these laws, the violation will appear on your driving record and remain there for 36 months but a point will not be added to your record

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