

# FACT SHEET | Transportation Reforms

*2015 Budget for a Better Minnesota*

---

This session, Governor Dayton and the Minnesota Legislature enacted several new reforms that will improve the flow of traffic in our cities, and crack down on distracted driving to improve safety on our roadways.

## Synchronizing Traffic Lights

Sitting and waiting for the light to change can be frustrating. To improve the capacity of Minnesota's roadways and reduce congestion, Governor Dayton and the Legislature have asked Minnesota road authorities to complete an inventory of traffic signals across the state, especially in highly-travelled corridors. Synchronizing traffic lights will save Minnesotans time, fuel, and money while protecting the environment.

- **Saving Minnesotans Time** – Well-timed signals will reduce congestion and travel delays.
- **Saving Minnesotans Fuel** – Cars that spend less time idling at stop lights will burn less fuel and provide greater fuel economy to motorists. The Minnesota Department of Transportation estimates that it costs Minnesotans \$15 in excessive fuel consumption for every hour of delay.
- **Protecting Our Environment** – Cars idling at poorly timed lights spew exhaust into the atmosphere. Reducing the quantity of cars idling at traffic lights statewide will reduce exhaust emissions and protect the quality of our air, and environment.

## Cracking Down on Distracted Driving

Between 2011 and 2013, distracted driving was a factor in one out of four crashes in Minnesota leading to more than 60 deaths on Minnesota roadways. That's why Governor Dayton signed into law new penalties for drivers caught texting while driving. The law will increase fines to \$225 for motorists with two or more texting-while-driving violations.

- **Keeping Minnesotans Safe** – Between 2011 and 2013, distracted driving (including texting while driving) was a factor in one out of four traffic crashes in Minnesota, resulting in about 64 deaths and 8,188 injuries per year, according to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. DPS estimates that distracted driving could be responsible for about one-quarter of all vehicle crashes
- **Put The Phone Away** – In Minnesota, it is illegal for drivers to read, compose or send texts and emails, as well as access the web while the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic. This includes sitting at a stoplight or stopped in traffic. It also is illegal for drivers with a permit or provisional driver's license to use a cell phone while driving, except for emergencies to call 911.