

Legal advisor gives wreck advice

Laws require driver responsibility

by Dan Usiak
Student Legal Advisor
During 1981 in Texas, 58,017 automobile accidents were reported and in the first half of 1982 there were 222,991 accidents reported. There are some things drivers should be aware of if involved in an automobile accident.

If involved in a collision, Texas law requires that a motorist provide his name, address, registration number of the car, driver's license and the name of his motor vehicle liability insurer. Upon request he must show his driver's license to the driver, occupant of or any person tending the vehicle struck.

If anyone is injured, there is a legal duty to render reasonable assistance. This may include carrying or making arrangements for the carrying of anyone injured to a doctor or a hospital if necessary, or if requested by the injured person.

Failure to stop and give information and aid in an accident involving death or personal injuries could result in a conviction carrying a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a \$5,000 fine. If there is damage to the vehicles but no personal injuries, failure to give information and aid is a misdemeanor. The maximum penalty is confinement in jail for a term not to exceed one year and a fine not to exceed \$2,000.

The requirement to give information and aid applies to all drivers involved in an accident, regardless of who was at fault. It also applies to a driver who causes an accident even though his car does not collide with another.

A driver who damages an unattended vehicle or a fixture legally upon or adjacent to a highway or street has a legal duty to stop and make a reasonable attempt to locate the owner of

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the vehicle or fixture. The driver who strikes a fixture must provide his name and address,

the registration number of his vehicle and if requested exhibit his driver's license.

The driver who damages an unattended vehicle must give the name and address of the driver and owner of his vehicle and a statement of the circumstances of the collision to the owner of the damaged vehicle. If the owner of the damaged vehicle cannot be located, the information shall be left in a visible place on the vehicle.

When the damage to any vehicle or fixture in any accident is \$250 or more, all drivers involved must file a written report with the Department of Public Safety within 10 days of the accident. This is done by filing a Driver's Confidential Accident Report which is available from any police or DPS office.

Also, the name, address and phone number of all witnesses should be obtained. Don't forget to get the name, address, phone number, license numbers, name of the automobile insurance carrier and policy number from all other drivers. Avoid admitting guilt in the collision. The accident should be reported to an auto insurance agent as soon as possible.

Students needing the assistance of an attorney to handle criminal or civil actions stemming from a traffic accident should contact the Students' Legal Department. The department cannot represent students in court cases which result from a collision, but it can give advice and recommend a private attorney if necessary.

Low gas prices may buffer tax

by Stephanie M. Ross
Battalion Reporter

Although the new federal gasoline tax will add 5 cents to every gallon of gasoline bought, some local service station owners say that declining gasoline prices mean the consumer won't feel the pinch as much.

The 5 cent per gallon tax, passed by Congress on Dec. 6, will be paid to the government by oil refineries and then passed on to retailers and consumers.

In an interview with U.S. News and World Report, Secretary of Transportation Drew Lewis said that because of the present oversupply of gasoline, the refineries and distributors will find it difficult to pass the entire tax on to the consumer.

College Station Exxon station owner Rudy Prigge said that he doesn't know if the refineries will pass the entire tax onto the retailer. If the refineries do pass it onto him, he doesn't know if he will pass the entire tax to his customers. He said he must sell his gasoline at competitive prices in order to be competitive with other stations.

Gas prices in the College Station area have been declining weekly for the past three months, Prigge said. If they continue to decline, the consumer may not even notice the added tax.

Ronnie Fox, a College Station Mobile station owner, said that the tax will definitely be passed on to the consumer because currently all the gasoline taxes are paid directly by the consumer. Fox said that 9 cents per gallon is for taxes — 5 cents in state taxes and 4 cents in federal taxes.

Eighty percent of the new tax will be used to complete the interstate highway system and repair roads and bridges. The other 20 percent will be used for mass-transit improvements.

Lewis expects the additional tax to generate about 5.5 billion dollars a year, and create 170,000 jobs in construction and related industries.

According to U.S. News and World Report, in 1984 Texas will receive \$843.7 million in revenues from the tax, a 92.3 percent increase from 1982.

Debugging taught to law enforcers

by Pamela Haisler
Battalion Reporter

The Texas Engineering Extension Service offered a course last week at Texas A&M to teach law enforcement agencies and security departments how to detect listening devices.

Course instructor Charlie Taylor said the course taught students how to find eavesdropping devices hooked up to telephone lines, radios and computers.

Taylor, president of Data Loss Prevention Inc., said the course offers students hands-on training with some of the most modern debugging devices.

He said changes in technology, and the rapid increase in sophisticated methods of eavesdropping inspired the course.

Most of the students are employees of police, private security or corporate security departments, said Taylor, who has

been involved in eavesdropping countermeasures for 10 years.

"This is the first time a course of this type has been taught at a major university," he said.

Patrick Dalagher, head of the law enforcement training division of TEEX, said the course resulted from a survey of law enforcement officers and security people who indicated a need for instruction in this area.

Since December the training division has added many courses that meet the needs of security departments and modernize its instruction areas.

The countermeasures course is an excellent example of the training modernization TEEX has undergone, Dalagher said.

An advanced course on the subject will be taught in March, and the beginner's course will be repeated in April at Texas A&M.

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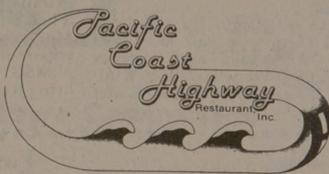
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