



## PRESS RELEASE

### EL PASO DISTRICT

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## TxDOT, EPPD, EPE AND SISD PARTNER FOR PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CAMPAIGN

*The call for safety comes as pedestrian deaths persist*

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**EL PASO** – The Texas Department of Transportation El Paso District is partnering with the El Paso Police Department, the El Paso Electric Company and the Socorro Independent School District for a pedestrian safety campaign launching ahead of Halloween and the end of daylight saving time. The campaign consists of bilingual educational material and the distribution of thousands of reflective slap bands.

“We have had 24 pedestrian traffic related deaths in the City of El Paso this year, compared to 21 for all of 2018,” said El Paso Police Assistant Chief Victor Zarur. “We believe education and awareness can reduce or eliminate future fatalities. While the driver has been at fault in a few cases, the majority of our pedestrian deaths this year are a result of pedestrians not crossing at appropriate locations.”

About half of those deaths have occurred on high speed roadways like I-10 and US 54, prompting additional concern.

“One death on our roadways is one too many,” said TxDOT El Paso District Engineer Tomas Treviño. “High speed roadways like I-10, US 54 and Loop 375 aren’t places for walking or crossing. Things can change in an instant while we are driving. Everyone always needs to be alert and pay attention, eliminate distractions like cell phones and listening devices and take extra precautions at night.”

Pedestrians are encouraged to always use a crosswalk and use sidewalks if available. It is illegal to walk in the road if a sidewalk is nearby. If there isn’t a sidewalk, pedestrians should walk on the left side of the road facing traffic, as far away from traffic as possible.

“Safety comes first’ is a common phrase and a daily practice at El Paso Electric,” said El Paso Electric Interim Chief Executive Officer Adrian Rodriguez. “As our core value, it is our priority to ensure the safety of our employees and those we serve, and we are proud to partner with TxDOT, EPPD and SISD in sharing this important message.”

In addition, drivers involved in a crash or who experience their vehicle stalling should remember to get their ride to the side, if possible; turn on their hazard lights, and call for help. If drivers are stalled on a main lane, they should turn on their hazard lights, stay buckled in their vehicle and call 9-1-1.

With the sun setting earlier and Halloween around the corner, everyone is especially reminded of child pedestrian safety.

“Our number one priority is to provide safe and supportive learning environments, which includes before and after school when our students and families are on the roads and sidewalks,” said SISD Superintendent José Espinoza, Ed.D. “I encourage everyone to be highly vigilant around our schools and at peak traffic times to ensure our pedestrians are safe. Team SISD is proud to be working with TxDOT, EPPD and EP Electric to Keep SISD Safe.”

**A press conference to launch the joint safety collaboration is scheduled for Thursday, October 17 at 10 a.m. at O’Shea Keleher Elementary. 1800 Leroy Bonse Dr.**

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