

North Shore Regional Safety Coalition meeting

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State Rep. Tim Burns, author of legislation aimed at restricting cell phones to hands free on the Causeway, announced at the meeting that he will pull his bill, amid logistical and legal concerns raised by Causeway representatives and recent court decisions that he said have limited police powers to search cell phones. Causeway General Manager Carlton Dufrechou said his agency is working to improve safety on the bridge in other ways and that it will soon embark on a safety campaign that encourages drivers to put down their phones and otherwise avoid distractions while driving.

Hammond Police Department held a juvenile underage drinking enforcement event March 19<sup>th</sup>, will hold a DWI checkpoint in April, and will participate in the upcoming Buckle Up In Your Truck campaign. State Police is also participating in BUIYT

FHWA will hold intersection geometry workshops in Baton Rouge and New Orleans in May. The New Orleans workshop will be May 18<sup>th</sup> and the Baton Rouge workshop May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Tangipahoa Parish is working to improve safety at 25 railroad crossings, mostly through pavement markings and other low-cost improvements. The project will be administered by DOTD using federal transfer safety funds. Tangipahoa will also hold No Refusal two days a week through the remainder of the LHSC grant year.

Slidell Police Department is hosting Booze and Cruise You Lose DWI programs ahead of prom season this year. These presentations are presented annually at high schools in Slidell and include a mock crash. Slidell will also hold a DWI checkpoint in April.

Aaron Chabaud reported that LA Driving, the electronic DWI reporting system, is being set up through LHSC at law enforcement agencies throughout the Troop L area. LHSC also has available 2015 mini grants for the purposes of O.P. or DWI enforcement available to law enforcement agencies without personnel to keep up with annualized grants.

Chris Laborde said he's continuing work on getting together community partners that may be willing to screen safety messages on electronic billboards. Lamar has already expressed a willingness to do this. We just need to determine which messages we want to screen.

DOTD construction report:

- Work will resume in April on the I-12 overlay in St. Tammany from the Tangipahoa line to U.S. 190
- Work will begin this month on I-12 widening in Slidell from US 11 to Northshore Blvd. Airport Road
- Utility work is ongoing ahead of a project to widen LA 21 from Bootlegger Road to 11<sup>th</sup> Street in Covington
- Work started March 9 on US 51B roundabouts at the I-12 ramps and Club Deluxe in Hammond
- Work is scheduled to begin in May on the French Branch Project (I-10, I-12, I-59 Interchange) in Slidell.

We would like to plan a Saved By the Belt recognition in conjunction with the next Click It or Ticket enforcement campaign, to be given out in either May or June. State police Trooper Paul Clark said they have someone in mind.

Tricia Keffer announced that other safety coalitions from across the state will be joining the North Shore meeting in May.

At the recent statewide Impaired Driving meeting, Ken Trull of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission announced that blood draw funding will be made available to law enforcement agencies for No Refusals. More information will be forthcoming. He also stated that LHSC wants every agency in the state to have access to a Drug Recognition Expert 24 hours a day; training dates and an application can be found at [www.lsp.org/safety\\_dre.html](http://www.lsp.org/safety_dre.html).

Emilie Bahr announced that April 13-17 in NOLA Bike to Work Week and encouraged North Shore participation