



NEW YORK CITY TAXI & LIMOUSINE COMMISSION

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TLC NEWS | PRESS RELEASES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release #05-99

May 1999

TLC UNANIMOUSLY VOTES "YES" FOR RULE PROHIBITING WIRELESS TELEPHONE USE WHILE DRIVING STARTING JULY 1, "NO YAKKING WHILE HACKING!"

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) voted unanimously today to create a rule that would prohibit all its driver licensees from using wireless telephones while driving. The vote took place during the TLC's monthly open meeting, held at its 40 Rector Street headquarters.

"It is important to point out that this action does not ban wireless telephones," said TLC Chairperson Diane McGrath-McKechnie. "But it does stop drivers from talking on telephones while 100% of their concentration should be on doing the job of driving their passengers safely. We all agree that there is a time and a place for drivers to use wireless telephones, whether it is to check in with their families, or to call in a 911-level emergency. But we also agree that such a time and place is at the side of the road, and not while they are driving."

The proposed rule came about as a result of numerous consumer complaints that reported concerns specific to drivers being on their cellular or wireless telephones while they were being transported to their destination. These passenger concerns moved the TLC to investigate the issue further, an investigation that led to research on the federal level which suggested a possible link between vehicular accidents and wireless telephone use. The study, conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) concluded, among other findings, that hands-free telephone models were not inherently safer than hand-held units.

Public testimony was heard prior to the vote, at which taxicab industry representatives spoke overwhelmingly in favor of the new rule. After its tentative effective date of July 1, 1999, the rule would specify a \$200 and two violation-point penalty for convicted violators.

It is believed that this rule would be the first of its kind for taxicab and livery drivers anywhere in the United States or abroad.