



KAUFMAN COUNTY SHERIFFS OFFICE  
SHERIFF DAVID A. BYRNES



# NOTES FROM THE SHERIFF

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## Dealing with Road Rage

In a lethal case of road rage, a driver angry about a vehicle using its high - beams on other cars on the highway speeds up and attempts to cut the unaware driver off. The result ended in a roadside faceoff between two drivers, and one driver is fatally shot and killed. This scenario has not happened in Kaufman County, but very well could. In 2010, Kaufman County 911 received **3,636** calls regarding reckless drivers. That number is astounding !

While most road rage incidents do not end in death, Kaufman County deputies agree that the aggressive behavior of many drivers can lead to personal injury and property damage. With a little courtesy and self-control most road rage incidents can be prevented.

“We all have to share the road, and we want to be safe driving,” Sheriff David A. Byrnes said. “Driving is dangerous enough without having to contend with drivers who cannot control themselves. Aggressive driving and road rage is not acceptable.”

Road rage is defined as violent or visibly angry behavior by a driver of a motor vehicle which can result in crashes or other incidents on roadways.

The following are possible signs of road rage or aggressive driving:

- Cutting off other drivers, or preventing other vehicles from merging
- Hitting the horn or flashing lights
- Throwing objects from a moving vehicle
- Rude hand gestures ,shouting obscenities, or threats
- Generally aggressive driving, including sudden acceleration, braking, and closely tailgating
- Getting out of a vehicle in an attempt to start a confrontation, or threatening to use or using a weapon

Strong emotions interfere with your ability to think reasonably and make wise decisions. They also increase your chances of making a mistake. You can minimize these effects by using courteous driving strategies. Driving is emotionally challenging because unexpected events happen constantly.

Ways to Avoid Road Rage

- Never make obscene gestures and avoid eye contact
- Avoid confrontation and keep a cool head
- Never get behind the wheel if you are tired or irritable
- Do not use your vehicle to intimidate others, do not tailgate, or “ride someone's tail”
- Do not take the problems on the road personally



**ROAD RAGE CONTINUED**

Please take a moment to reflect on your own driving behavior, then work to improve on it all year long to help make our roadways in Kaufman County safer and less stressful for everyone. If confronted by an aggressive driver, try to control your anger to avoid escalating the situation. Attempt to safely get out of the way. Avoid eye contact or obscene gestures, these will not help the situation. If a serious incident occurs, try to pull over to a safe location and dial 911.

**It's The Law!**  
**Texas Open Container Law**



Sec. 49.031. POSSESSION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE IN MOTOR VEHICLE

(a) In this section:

(1) "Open container" means a bottle, can, or other receptacle that contains any amount of alcoholic beverage and that is open, that has been opened, that has a broken seal, or the contents of which are partially removed.

(2) "Passenger area of a motor vehicle" means the area of a motor vehicle designed for the seating of the operator and passengers of the vehicle. The term does not include:

- (A) a glove compartment or similar storage container that is locked;
- (B) the trunk of a vehicle; or
- (C) the area behind the last upright seat of the vehicle, if the vehicle does not have a truck.

(3) "Public highway" means the entire width between and immediately adjacent to the boundary lines of any public road, street, highway, interstate, or other publicly maintained way if any part is open for public use for the purpose of motor vehicle travel. The term includes the right-of-way of a public highway.

(b) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly possesses an open container in a passenger area of a motor vehicle that is located on a public highway, regardless of whether the vehicle is being operated or is stopped or parked. Possession by a person of one or more open containers in a single criminal episode is a single offense.

(c) It is an exception to the application of Subsection (b) that at the time of the offense the defendant was a passenger in:

- (1) the passenger area of a motor vehicle designed, maintained, or used primarily for the transportation of persons for compensation, including a bus, taxicab, or limousine; or
- (2) the living quarters of a motorized house coach or motorized house trailer, including a self-contained camper, a motor home, or a recreational vehicle.

(d) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor.

(e) A peace officer charging a person with an offense under this section, instead of taking the person before a magistrate, shall issue to the person a written citation and notice to appear that contains the time and place the person must appear before a magistrate, the name and address of the person charged, and the offense charged. If the person makes a written promise to appear before the magistrate by signing in duplicate the citation and notice to appear issued by the officer, the officer shall release the person.

**MONTHLY STATISTICAL REPORT  
 DECEMBER 2010**

Incidents Reported by Deputies	1,067
Reports Forwarded to Investigators	566
Cases Cleared by Investigators	154
Arrests Made	194

**Detention Division**

Average Daily Inmate Population	309
Inmates Being Held for TDCJ	09
Admissions to Jail	429
Releases from Jail	446
Out of County Inmates Housed	0

**Communications Division**

Emergency 911 Calls	2,319
Number of Calls for Service	4,138

**Warrant Division**

Warrants Received for Service	325
Warrants Served or Recalled	494

**Civil Process/Execution Division**

Civil Documents Received	145
Civil Documents Served/ Recalled	129

**"Together We Can Make A Difference"**

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