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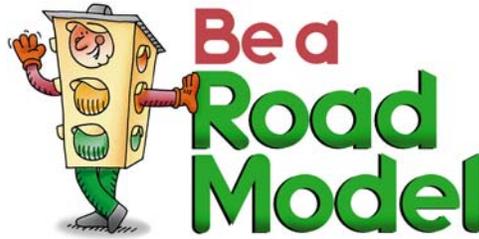
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## **MaineDOT Flash Facts, Topic : Road Side Emergencies / Cellular Phone Use, 2008**

Maine Department of Transportation

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## MaineDOT Flash Facts

### Topic: Road Side Emergencies / Cellular Phone Use

During the last three years, approximately 3,000 crashes in Maine resulted from vehicle defects or poor vehicle conditions. A vehicle problem does not always result in a crash, but often leads to a breakdown and an inconvenience. Emergencies like this can happen to anyone, at any time.

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Mechanical or other vehicle breakdowns can't always be predicted. Scheduled vehicle maintenance and periodic vehicle condition checks can lessen your chances of running into a problem. But flat tires, dead batteries and other unexpected problems do happen. The best thing you can do in these cases is to be prepared. The MaineDOT recommends that you have these items in your vehicle:

- A good spare tire and jack
  - Battery jumper cables
  - Basic tool kit
  - First Aid Kit, including a flashlight, water and blanket
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What do you do if your vehicle breaks down while on the road?

Vehicle breakdowns rarely happen at a good time or a safe place. The key to deciding how to handle them is to always keep safety in mind. Some safety advice:

- Get **completely off the road** and safely away from traffic
  - Turn on emergency flashers
  - Move passengers to a safe place
  - Call for help
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An estimated 2.5 billion mobile phones are in use worldwide. There are approximately 200 million subscribers in the US. With the increasing use of cell phones, more car crashes are occurring due to driver inattention.

Cell phones are an invaluable tool when it comes to calling for help on the road. It is still important, however, to know when and how to safely use a cell phone on the road. The MaineDOT recommends that you:

- Make calls only when your vehicle is stopped and safely off the road.
- Don't drive and talk on your cell phone at the same time.
- Be sure to provide a highway mile point or familiar landmark when reporting an emergency.

***Be a Road Model:*** Safely use your cell phone to your advantage and remember to have everyone buckle up.