



FULL DISCLOSURE

BY GARVEY BIGGERS

This month lots happened at our state legislature. In the world of personal injury news the enactment of a new law occurred prohibiting any use of a cellphone while driving. That's right! No more texting or talking from a handheld device. Below, please see some local news articles about the new law and the city ordinances that are still in effect. Be careful out there, as city boundary lines are difficult to detect, and to know whether using a handheld phone for any purpose is allowed. You are better off just not using a cellphone while driving.



By the way, did you know that SRP prohibited the use of a cellphone for all of its employees as early as 2013? SRP has set many standards for safety in Arizona.

On May 3, 2019 I am taking to the radio air waves on 1100AM KFAX Radio with Carol Blonder. She will interview me for 30 minutes starting at 4pm. Tell your friends to listen up and call in if there is a good question to ask.

We are bringing a lawsuit against the state of Arizona for the way it operates one of it's prisons. The father of our clients was found dangling from an electrical cord while in solitary confinement with only six months left on his prison term. He had been incarcerated for driving drunk and had allegedly misbehaved with only six months left. One thing led to another and he is dead. Private companies run many of our prisons. They are paid on a per inmate basis.

We continue our work with the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA). These folks are the ones who fight for Seventh Amendment rights. What is the 7th Amendment again? You ask -- having forgotten what you learned in the 8th grade. It is the right to a jury trial in all civil cases.

Nowadays, we are forced to sign agreements for Apps, car purchases and almost

anything online that completely waives the right to a jury trial. Beware! Think before signing and do not be afraid to speak up for your 7th Amendment rights.

IN THE NEWS

Distracted Driving - Texting and Phone Use Laws around the Phoenix Area

Distracted driving is dangerous - claiming 3,166 lives in 2017 alone - according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Report recently published in April 2019. [Here's a link to get more of the facts.](#)

Arizona is one of the last states to have a statewide ban on texting and driving. On Monday, April 22nd, the governor signed a statewide ban on handheld cellphone use while driving. Police officers can begin issuing warnings right now, but no citations until January 2021. The law prohibits drivers from talking, texting, typing or browsing social-media sites on their phone, unless they are using the device in a hands-free mode.

[For more information, read here.](#)

Before this state-wide ban, many cities passed local ordinances. It can be difficult and confusing for drivers to know where you can text or talk and drive. Officers in the cities with texting or handheld phone bans can fine and ticket you before the state law takes effect.

These cities Prohibit Texting While Driving:

- Phoenix
- Fountain Hills
- Salt River Pima Indian Community

These cities Prohibit Handheld Cellphone Use While Driving:

- Tempe
- Surprise
- El Mirage
- Glendale

Tempe was the first East Valley city to ban drivers from handheld phone use — whether texting or talking. The Tempe City Council unanimously approved the ban in February 2019, with an emergency clause that put it in effect immediately. "The facts are that texting causes accidents and even death." [Read more...](#)

Glendale's distracted driving law is in also effect since February 2019. The ordinance states you can be pulled over for using your phone, even if you're at a stop light. Police will be trained on the requirements and exceptions, which include calling 911 and whether you're in the process of switching to 'hands free mode' on a device. [Read more...](#)



Fighting back against distracted driving - El Mirage tells drivers, "Put it down!" in November 2018...."It's a good thing," explained Alan Martinez, who says he was hit by a distracted driver over the summer. [Read more...](#)

Since September 2018, Surprise made it illegal to use mobile devices that are not hands-free. Violators faces up to \$250. [Read more...](#)

6 Innovative Water Policies that Helped Arizona Grow during a Drought



One seldom sees the words “Arizona” and “progressive” in the same sentence. But when it comes to water, Arizona has often been at the cutting edge of legal and policy reform.

An arid climate, surging population and declining groundwater tables drove Arizona to be creative.

Innovation 1: Slow groundwater use

The 1980 [Arizona Groundwater Management Act](#) banned the drilling of new wells in areas of the state suffering the greatest water table declines and required developers and municipalities to show that they have an “assured water supply” before they receive permits to break ground for new projects.

Innovation 2: Store unused water

During years when Arizona’s cities and farmers do not use the state’s entire allotment of Central Arizona Project (CAP) water, Arizona’s Aquifer Storage and Recovery Programs and the Arizona Water Bank cleverly use aquifers to store water for future recovery. Arizona has stored more than 3 million acre-feet of its unused CAP allocation in this way. (An acre-foot is approximately 325,000 gallons.)

Innovation 3: Reuse water

Arizona has been a pioneer in the reuse of water. Before the 1972 Clean Water Act, cities routinely dumped raw sewage into the nation’s rivers. Thanks to the act, by the 1980s the quality of water from treatment plants had improved so dramatically that businesses began to appreciate the economic value of treated water.

[Read More...](#)

**Water
&**

Power

Opinion:

Should APS be able to use our money to convince us to elect regulators who will, in turn, give APS more of our money? Top APS executives have been up to their electrical eyeballs in political scheming to ensure the Arizona Corporation Commission remained in the utility's hip pocket.



[Read more of the Opinion Article by Laurie Roberts of the Arizona Republic](#)

SRP Rate Decrease:

More than 1 million customers of Salt River Project will see a \$1 to \$4 decrease in their monthly bills starting in May. While the utility's board of directors mostly agreed with the overall rate reduction, which is being spurred by low natural-gas prices, they were sharply divided over the rates for customers with solar. [Read more...](#)

Garvey Biggers is a Salt River Project Council member. The views expressed in this (article/post) are solely his individual views and opinions and are not made by or on behalf of the SRP Council or Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District.



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