



TxDOT Debuts New Travel Information Line

Written On August 18, 2010 By [Bob Kraft](#)

The Texas Department of Transportation has just set up a travel hotline to give drivers real-time information on traffic conditions throughout the state. The phone number is 800-452-9292. The system is based on interactive voice response, in which the caller asks questions, and the automated system responds.

This is an excellent idea, and I look forward to using it. It's really still in beta test stage at this point, so it's a little unfair to make fun of a "flaw" in the system. However, apparently no one seemed to consider the fact that a few of us around here speak with slight accents. And the automated system is not yet fine-tuned to handle Texas dialect yet, and is looking for testers with different regional accents. Here's a quote from Steve Simmons, TxDot Deputy Executive Director:

"John Steinbeck wrote that Texas is 'a nation in every sense of the word,' and at times, we even seem to have our own language with accents from every corner of the state. Now we need callers with an East Texas twang and a Panhandle drawl. We want South Texans to help the system learn to understand 'Refugio' and Central Texans to teach the computer the number of times the letter 's' is in 'New Braunfels' or how to pronounce 'Mexia' or 'Bexar.'"

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