



"Click It or Ticket" – Safety Belts Save Lives

- Regular safety belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes.
- Yet nearly one in five Americans (18 percent nationally) still fail to regularly wear their safety belts when driving or riding in a motor vehicle.
- Although safety belt use increased to a record 82 percent nationally in 2005 (up from 58 percent since 1994), too many Americans still choose not to regularly wear their safety belts.
- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 31,693 passenger vehicle occupants died in traffic crashes during 2004 – and 55 percent of those killed were NOT wearing their safety belts at the time of the crash.
- In 2005, observed safety belt use in primary law states averaged 85 percent, compared to 75 percent in states with secondary laws.

Young Males, Pickup Truck Occupants, Rural Drivers and Drivers at Night are Those Least Likely to Buckle Up and at Greatest Risk

- Men – especially younger men – are much less likely to buckle up. In 2004, 67 percent of male drivers and 73 percent of male passengers between the ages of 18 and 34 who were killed in crashes were NOT wearing their safety belts.
- According to NHTSA, pickup truck drivers and passengers, particularly among young males, consistently have the lowest safety belt usage rates of all motorists.
- In 2005, the observed safety belt use rate in pickup trucks was only 73 percent compared to 83 percent in passenger cars and 85 percent in vans and SUVs.
- This lack of safety belt use is deadly. In 2004, 68 percent of pickup truck drivers and 73 percent of pickup truck passengers who were killed in traffic crashes were not buckled up.
- One of the deadliest causes in any vehicle crash comes when passengers get ejected from the vehicle – with most coming from failure to wear safety belts.
- In fact, 74 percent of passenger vehicle occupants who were totally ejected from their vehicle in 2004 were killed. But only 1 in 100 drivers and passengers in fatal crashes who were wearing their safety belts were totally ejected and killed.
- The ejection rate for occupants of light trucks (e.g. pickup trucks) involved in fatal crashes is nearly double the rate for passenger car occupants.

- Motorists can increase the odds of survival in a rollover crash in a light truck by nearly 80 percent by wearing their safety belt.
- Americans driving or riding on rural roadways face a much greater risk of being injured or killed in traffic crashes than do those in urban or suburban areas, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
- Safety belt use in the Nation's rural areas consistently trails the national average.
- Nationally, in 2005, only 79 percent of rural drivers and their passengers were observed wearing their safety belts compared to 81 percent for urban motorists and 83 percent among suburban motorists.
- While only about a fifth of Americans live in rural areas, rural traffic fatalities accounted for 58 percent of the Nation's total in 2004.
- Even more alarming, the motor vehicle crash fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled in rural areas is almost double the fatality rate in urban areas.
- Part of the danger to rural drivers comes from delayed recovery and emergency response along isolated roadways. But much of the danger is also due to excessive speed, increased alcohol use, vehicle rollovers and higher occupant ejection rates.

No More Excuses – “Click It or Ticket”

- The Spokane County Traffic Safety Commission is joining with hundreds of other State and local law enforcement and highway safety officials across the nation during late May for an aggressive “Click It or Ticket” mobilization to save lives by cracking down on safety belt law violators.
- National, State and local law enforcement officials will be zeroing in on the one in five Americans who still don't get it.
- The goal is simple: to save more lives by convincing drivers and passengers to always buckle up.
- This special “Click It or Ticket” safety belt high-visibility enforcement mobilization includes a variety of increased enforcement and outreach activities to reach rural motorists including special television and radio advertisements targeting non-belt users.
- The 2006 “Click It or Ticket” national enforcement mobilization runs from May 22nd through June 4th.
- For more information, please visit www.buckleupamerica.org.