



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth Police Department

2030 North Arlington Avenue, Duluth, MN 55811
218-730-5400 | www.duluthmn.gov | Gordon Ramsay, Chief of Police

For more information contact Jim Hansen, Public Information Officer 218-390-2232



DATE: 05/15/2014
NATURE OF INCIDENT: Enhanced Seatbelt Education & Enforcement
CASE NO.:
INCIDENT DATE :05/19/2014
INCIDENT TIME:
INCIDENT LOCATION: Duluth, MN
SUBJECT: Enhanced Seatbelt Education & Enforcement
BY: DPD Public Information Officer Jim Hansen (218) 390-2232

CLICK IT OR TICKET: INCREASED SEAT BELT PATROLS TAKE TO DULUTH ROADS

The Duluth Police Department, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office, UMD Police Department, Minnesota State Patrol, Hermantown Police Department, Proctor Police Department and Floodwood Police Department are taking part in a statewide *Click It or Ticket* enhanced Seatbelt education and enforcement campaign May 19th – June 1st.

In the last five years on Minnesota roads (2009-2013), there were 1,423 motor vehicle occupant deaths, of which 587 (41.3 percent) were not buckled up. According to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety, data from the past five years also shows:

- more than 40 percent (237 of 587) of unbelted fatalities were between 15- to 29-years-old
- nearly 64 percent (190 of 298) of drinking drivers killed were not wearing a seat belt
- nearly 44 percent (474 of 1,084) of those killed in greater Minnesota crashes were unbelted compared to 33 percent (113 of 339) in the seven-county metro area

“Every year, teens and young adults represent a large percentage of unbelted traffic deaths, which indicates there is still a major issue with seat belt usage among that age group. For whatever reason – be it comfort, restriction or philosophy – some motorists and passengers still refuse to wear their seat belts. We ask them to remember that their minor inconvenience could turn out to be a major life saver.”

Drivers, Passengers – Including in the Back Seat – Must Be Belted

In Minnesota, drivers and passengers in all seating positions, including in the back seat, are required to be buckled up or seated in the correct child restraint. Officers will stop and ticket unbelted drivers or passengers. Seat belts must be worn correctly — low and snug across the hips; shoulder straps should never be tucked under an arm or behind the back.

The Importance of Buckling Up

In rollover crashes, unbelted motorists are usually ejected from the vehicle. In most cases, the vehicle will roll over them. Often, unbelted motorists will crack teeth out on steering wheels or break their nose, and even slam into and injure or kill others in the vehicle.

In a crash, odds are six times greater for injury if a motorist is not buckled up.

Minnesota Child Car Seat Law and Steps

Minnesota statute requires children under age 8 to ride in a federally approved car seat or booster, unless the child is 4 feet 9 inches or taller. Safety restraint steps progress as children age and grow:

- Rear-facing infant seats – Newborns to at least 1 year and 20 pounds; recommended up to age 2. It is safest to keep a child rear-facing as long as possible.
- Forward-facing toddler seats – Age 2 until around age 4. It's preferable to keep children in a harnessed restraint as long as possible.
- Booster seats – Use once outgrown a forward-facing harnessed restraint; safest to remain in a booster until 4 feet 9 inches tall, or at least age 8.
- Seat belts – A child is ready for an adult seat belt when they can sit with their back against the vehicle seat, knees bent comfortably and completely over the vehicle seat edge without slouching, and feet touching the floor. Children 4 feet 9 inches tall or taller can correctly fit in a lap/shoulder belt.

Toward Zero Deaths

The Click It or Ticket seat belt enforcement and education is a component of the state's Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) initiative. A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes – education, enforcement, engineering and emergency trauma response.



