



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth Police Department

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DATE: 10/09/2014
NATURE OF INCIDENT: Enhanced Seatbelt Enforcement
CASE NO.:
INCIDENT DATE :10/10/2014
INCIDENT TIME:
INCIDENT LOCATION: Duluth & Surrounding Area
SUBJECT: Enhanced Seatbelt Enforcement
BY: DPD Public Information Officer Jim Hansen (218) 390-2232

[CLICK IT OR TICKET](#)

“BUCKLE UP – EVERY SEAT, EVERY RIDE”

[Duluth, MN] – A growing percentage of motorists in Minnesota are buckling up, and those that buck the trend jeopardize their lives and the lives of other motorists. The Duluth Police Department, St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office, UMD Police Department, Hermantown Police Department, Proctor Police Department, Floodwood Police Department and Minnesota State Patrol are increasing patrols October 10th – 26th to look for violators and are among nearly 400 Minnesota agencies conducting extra seat belt enforcement during the Click It or Ticket educational and enforcement campaign.

Seat Belt Use Climbing

Before Minnesota’s first seat belt law in June 1986, 20 percent of front seat vehicle occupants wore belts. Last year, 95 percent of drivers and front seat passengers were using seat belts. Enforcement, education and strengthening seat belt laws are influencing an increasing number of motorists to buckle up. Observational studies showed more front seat vehicle occupants are wearing seat belts:

- 53 percent in 1991
- 64 percent in 1996
- 74 percent in 2001
- 83 percent in 2006
- 93 percent in 2011

Risky Choice to Buck the Trend

Each year in Minnesota, less than half of occupants killed in motor vehicle crashes were buckled up. Additional data shows:

- In 2013, 78 percent of unbelted deaths occurred in Greater Minnesota.
- From 2011 – 2013, 816 were killed in Minnesota and only 49 percent were known to be belted.
- Last year, only 33 percent of drinking drivers killed were known to be belted.

Wear your seat belt and your chance of surviving a crash goes up significantly. The sad thing is teens and young adults too often make the wrong choice about seat belts compared to other age groups, and as a result are involved in more fatal crashes. We ask every person to speak up about buckling up before they drive anywhere.

Drivers and All Passengers Must Be Belted

Minnesota law states that drivers and passengers in all seating positions are 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.

Minnesota Child Car Seat Law and Steps

In Minnesota, children must be in a child restraint until they are 4 feet 9 inches tall, or at least age 8, whichever comes first. As children grow up, the car seats they use need to grow up with them:

- 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 after outgrowing a forward-facing harnessed restraint; safest to remain in a booster until 4 feet 9 inches tall, or at least age 8, whichever comes first.
- Seat belts – Appropriate when children can sit with their back against the seat and have their knees bent comfortably over the vehicle seat edge with feet touching the floor. Children at least 4 feet 9 inches tall can correctly wear 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.



