

VIRGINIA CLICK IT OR TICKET 2009 FACT SHEET & TALKING POINTS



Virginia Launches Statewide Enforcement Effort to Save Lives and Increase Seat Belt Use

- In an effort to save more lives on Virginia's roadways this May, local Law Enforcement agencies are partnering with Law Enforcement agencies across Virginia and the nation to buckle down on all motorists not buckled up.
- According to preliminary numbers from The Virginia Highway Safety Office at DMV, in 2008, there were a total of 821 crash related fatalities, of those, 631 fatalities occurred in vehicles that were equipped with safety restraints. 352 or 54 percent of the fatalities were not wearing restraints.
- Regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes.
- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), of the passenger vehicle occupants involved in fatal crashes in Virginia, the 55 percent that were restrained **survived**. When worn correctly, seat belts have proven to reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants by 45 percent – and by 60 percent in pickup trucks, SUVs and mini-vans.
- Yet nearly one in four Virginians still fail to regularly wear their seat belts when driving or riding in a motor vehicle.

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

- Men – especially younger men – are much less likely to buckle up. In Virginia in 2006, 78 percent of male drivers and 77 percent of male passengers between the ages of 18 and 34 who were killed in crashes for which restraint use was known, were NOT wearing their seat belts.
- According to NHTSA, pickup truck drivers and passengers, particularly among young males, consistently have the lowest seat belt usage rates of all motorists.
- In 2006, the National observed seat belt use rate in pickup trucks was only 74 percent compared to 82 percent in passenger cars and 84 percent in vans and SUVs.
- This lack of seat belt use is deadly. In 2006, 70 percent of pickup truck drivers and 76 percent of pickup truck passengers who were killed in traffic crashes in Virginia were not buckled up.
- One of the deadliest outcomes in any vehicle crash occurs when passengers get ejected from the vehicle – with most ejections coming from failure to wear seat belts.

- In fact, 75 percent of passenger vehicle occupants who were totally ejected from their vehicle in 2007 were killed in Virginia. But only 5 out of 100 drivers or passengers involved in fatal crashes were wearing their seat belts were totally ejected in Virginia.
- In Virginia, 22 percent of the occupants of light trucks involved in fatal crashes are ejected compared to 15 percent of passenger car occupants. Pickup trucks rollover twice as often as passenger cars.
- Motorists can increase the odds of survival in a rollover crash in a light truck by nearly 80 percent by wearing their seat 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 areas, according to NHTSA.
- Nationally, in 2006, only 78 percent of rural drivers and their passengers were observed wearing their seat belts compared to 79 percent for urban motorists and 84 percent among suburban motorists.
- While only about 27 percent of Virginians live in rural areas (based on 2000 Census data), rural traffic fatalities accounted for 59 percent of Virginia's total in 2006.
- Even more alarming, the motor vehicle crash fatality rate per 100M vehicle miles traveled in Virginia's rural areas is about double the fatality rate in Virginia's 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 due to low seat belt use in rural areas.

No More Excuses – “Click It or Ticket”

- From May 18 – May 31, Virginia will again be conducting a special, aggressive “Click It or Ticket” mobilization to enforce all traffic laws, boost the state's seat belt use and to reduce highway fatalities.
- The goal is simple: to save more lives by convincing drivers and passengers to always buckle up – so no more warnings and no more excuses for those not buckled up.
- Unless you want to risk a ticket, or worse - your life, you need to always remember to “Click It or Ticket” day and night.
- For more information, visit www.dmvnow.com/highwaysafety

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