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## ***Zero Tolerance for Traffic Violations During Thanksgiving Mobilization Law Enforcement Targets Unbelted Motorists***

The November Click It or Ticket enforcement mobilization begins in Virginia on Friday, Nov. 21 and continues through the Thanksgiving holiday. Law enforcement will be enforcing all traffic laws, with a special emphasis on seat belt and child safety seat laws.

During last year's five-day Thanksgiving holiday period, there were 11 fatalities, and eight of them were unrestrained. Plus, alcohol was a factor in at least four of the fatal crashes. This annual November Click It or Ticket enforcement mobilization is designed to prevent needless tragedies on our roadways, and to make sure motorists and passengers know that officers will be diligently patrolling Virginia's roadways.

During the 2013 November Click It or Ticket Mobilization, law enforcement officers across Virginia issued 1,134 safety belt citations, 225 child safety seat citations, 8,858 speeding tickets and 2,242 reckless driving citations; 323 DUI drivers were removed off the road and 22 juveniles were cited for underage drinking. Plus, 24,797 arrests and/or citations were issued in during the seven-day mobilization.

During a crash, being buckled up helps keep you safe and secure inside your vehicle, whereas being completely thrown out of a vehicle is almost always deadly. Seat belts are your best defense against impaired, aggressive and distracted drivers. [Local spokesperson] along with DMV's Virginia Highway Safety Office encourages everyone on the road to wear their seat belts during every trip, day and night.

Virginia law requires all front seat occupants of motor vehicles be restrained, and any passenger from birth to 18 years old be properly restrained in an appropriate child safety seat or seat belt. Virginia law also requires that rear-facing child restraint devices be placed in the back seat of a vehicle. "Not only is it the law in Virginia to wear your seat belt and make sure children are in a car seat, it's just the right thing to do," said [local spokesperson].

Last year in Virginia, 54 percent of all traffic fatalities, or 310 deaths, were unrestrained drivers and passengers. Also, 118 (38 percent) of the unrestrained deaths were young people ages 21 to 35, and 73 percent were males. Of the 228 unbelted driver fatalities, 55 (24 percent) had been drinking. Drivers (75.7 percent) and passengers (68.8 percent) in pickup trucks had the lowest seat belt use rates, along with passengers (69.4 percent) in work vans.

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