

CLICK IT OR TICKET MAY SEAT BELT MOBILIZATION: PRE-ENFORCEMENT NEWS RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE

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DON'T PUT YOUR LIFE IN THE HANDS OF OTHERS; BUCKLING UP IS A LIFE-SAVING DECISION

*Click It or Ticket: Extra Enforcement in **Rice County** Oct. 14 – 30*

Rice County – Choosing not to wear a seat belt is like gambling with your life every time you get into the vehicle. You never know when another driver will make a poor decision, and those who are not buckled increase their odds of being injured by six-times if they are in a crash.

Fortunately, most Minnesotans are choosing to make that life-saving decision. According to the 2016 Minnesota Seat Belt Survey, 93 percent of occupants are buckling up.

To continue educating motorists that seat belts save lives and it's the law to buckle up, **Law Enforcement in Rice County**, along with more than 300 law enforcement agencies across the state, will be participating in the statewide Click It or Ticket campaign Oct. 14 – Oct. 30. The extra enforcement and education campaign is coordinated by the Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety.

“Choosing to buckle up is a life-saving choice for you, your family and friends,” said Sergeant Kevin Tussing. “You would never let your child play sports without the proper protective gear, so make the same choice by giving yourself the best chance to survive a crash by wearing your seat belt every time you get into the vehicle.”

Not Buckling Up is a Dangerous Decision

Good people make bad choices on the road every day and not wearing a seat belt can prove tragic.

- In 2015, 91 unbelted motorists lost their lives on Minnesota roads.
- In a five year period (2011 – 2015), 38 percent of the 1,379 people killed while riding in motor vehicles were not wearing seat belts.
- In 2015, 77 percent of vehicle occupants who were ejected or partially ejected and died were not wearing a seat belt.

Speak Up about Buckling Up

If you are the driver, take control of your vehicle and those riding with you by refusing to start your engine until every passenger in your car is belted. If you are a passenger and see the driver unbelted, speak up and make sure the driver's seat belt is secure.

It's the Law

Minnesota law states that drivers and passengers in all seating positions must 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, and shoulder straps should never be tucked under an arm or behind the back.

Minnesota Child Car Seat Law and Steps

- In Minnesota, all children must be in a child restraint until they are 4'9" tall, or at least age 8, whichever comes first.
- Rear-facing child 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 seats - Age 2 until around age 4. It's preferable to keep children in a harnessed restraint until they reach the maximum weight limit.
- 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 - Use when children can sit with their back against the vehicle seat and have their knees bent comfortably over the edge with their feet touching the floor.

Toward Zero Deaths

The Click It or Ticket seat belt enforcement and education is a component of the state's Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program. 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.