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

NEWS RELEASE

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UNBELTED MOTORISTS GAMBLE WITH THEIR LIVES; EXTRA ENFORCEMENT INCREASES THEIR ODDS OF STAYING SAFE

*Law Enforcement in **Northfield** Cited 42 Unbelted Motorists during May 21 – June 3 Campaign*

Northfield/Rice County – Daredevil, thrill seeker, risk-taker — they may capture people’s attention and admiration in certain situations. Riding in a vehicle unbelted is not one of them when the odds of injury or death are so high.

Northfield Police/Rice County ticketed 42 motorists gambling with their lives during the statewide Click It or Ticket extra enforcement campaign May 21 – June 3. Sheriff’s deputies, police officers and state troopers representing more than 300 agencies participated in the campaign coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety.

Expect the Unexpected

If you buckle up in the front seat of a passenger car, you can reduce your risk of:

- Fatal injury by 45 percent (Kahane, 2015, as reported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).
- Moderate to critical injury by 50 percent (as reported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).

Only an estimated 8 percent of Minnesotans travel unbuckled yet those who were known to be unbelted represent 30 percent of motor vehicle occupants killed in 2016.

“I’m so thankful for the majority of Minnesotans who expect the unexpected and choose to wear seat belts,” said **Sergeant Kevin Tussing**. “For Minnesotans who refuse to buckle up because they don’t like being told what to do, figure they’re not endangering anybody else or aren’t traveling far, whatever the reason, it’s a selfish one. Think about life without you in it. I’ve seen what happens to families and friends left behind. Please buckle up and be there for yourself and others.”

Speak Up about Buckling Up

Often times, an unbelted occupant is ejected from the vehicle and killed. An unbelted motorist can also crash into a windshield or get thrown into other passengers, injuring or killing those who are buckled.

Drivers are in charge of their vehicles and of the safety of their passengers. They can refuse to start the car until every passenger is belted. Passengers also can speak up if the driver is endangering everyone in the vehicle by not buckling up.

The Law is for Safety

Minnesota law requires drivers and passengers in all seating positions to be buckled up or seated in the correct child safety seat. 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 seats - All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car seat until they have reached the height and weight limits allowed by the car seat manufacturer. It is safest to keep children rear-facing up to the maximum weight limit of the car seat.
- Forward-facing seats with harness - Toddlers and preschoolers who have reached the height and weight limits of the rear-facing car seat should use a forward-facing seat with harness until they reach the weight limit of the harness allowed by the car seat manufacturer.
- Booster seats - For school-age children who have reached the height and weight limits of the forward-facing seat. The booster must be used with a lap and shoulder belt.
- Seat belts - For children over 8 years old or have reached 4 feet 9 inches. Your 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.

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, emergency medical and trauma response, and everyone.