

For Immediate Release

May 18, 2015

Contact: Trooper Lawrence Hopper
Utah Highway Patrol
801-518-0949
lhopper@utah.gov

Keri Gibson
Utah Highway Safety Office
801-243-7571
kgibson@utah.gov

16th for the 17% on the 18th

The 16th Annual Click It or Ticket Campaign, Which Focuses on the 17% of Utahns Who Don't Buckle Up, Starts May 18th

UTAH – The Utah Department of Public Safety (DPS) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are joining forces with police and sheriffs' departments across Utah to save lives on Utah roads and highways by working together to increase seat belt use. Through the 16th annual Click It or Ticket enforcement mobilization, law enforcement officers will be working overtime from May 18th to May 31st stopping and educating motorists who aren't wearing a seat belt. The campaign is focusing on the 17% of Utahns who still don't buckle up.

According to the 2014 Utah Seat Belt Observational Survey conducted by the Utah Department of Public Safety's Highway Safety Office, 83.4% of Utah motorists use seat belts. Those who still aren't buckling up are predominantly males in rural areas. The study found the seat belt usage rate for urban areas was 85.8% and 73.8% for rural counties and that female occupants buckled up more often (86.4%) than their male counterparts (78.4%).

Law enforcement officers throughout Utah will be stopping unbuckled motorists and taking the opportunity to educate them about the importance of buckling up. On May 12, 2015, wearing a seat belt while driving became a primary law. In other words, law enforcement can stop and educate individuals for driving unbuckled on Utah roads. Prior to H.B. 79, failure to wear a seat belt was a secondary offense.

Two videos will be promoted through social media platforms to help remind drivers and passengers that there are no excuses for not buckling up. The videos can be found at

<https://youtu.be/b4JLvVjhS5w> (Ticket Talk 15 seconds)

<https://youtu.be/luz9N5rHoo> (Ticket Talk 30 seconds)

Last year 256 people died in fatal collisions on Utah roads and highways, and more nearly one third (72) of them were not restrained. Buckling up is one of the most effective things people can do to protect themselves in a crash. Seat belts reduce

the risk of injury and death by about 50% when used correctly, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

When the “Click It or Ticket” campaign first started in 2000, only 67.4% of Utah motorists buckled up. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that the steady increase in seat belt usage in Utah since the start of “Click It or Ticket” has resulted in more than 1,700 fewer traffic fatalities on our roadways.

The Utah Department of Public Safety’s Click It or Ticket Campaign is conducted in partnership with the Utah Department of Transportation and Zero Fatalities Program. Visit <http://clickitutah.org> for more information on Utah’s seat belt laws.

###