

For Immediate Release

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### **Law Enforcement Needs Your Help To Increase Seat Belt Use**

*Law enforcement agencies will work a second wave of Click It or Ticket enforcement September 16<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> but ask the public to help encourage family and friends to buckle up.*

UTAH – In a special September edition of the Click It or Ticket campaign, law enforcement agencies throughout Utah will be working overtime shifts from September 16<sup>th</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>. They will be stopping unbuckled motorists and issuing citations and warnings, and also taking the opportunity to educate them about the importance of buckling up. The goal of the campaign is to increase seat belt use and save lives. Law enforcement is asking for the public to help support their efforts by influencing family and friends to buckle up.

Information from a focus group of people who consistently did not buckle up indicated that these people would buckle up if asked to by a loved one. “This shows that the influence you have on your loved ones really makes a difference which in turn will help us save more lives on Utah roadways,” said Utah Highway Patrol Colonel Daniel Fuhr. “Law enforcement officers are out on the roads in an effort to educate drivers on how important seat belts are. But you as loved ones have a much greater influence in getting people who won’t wear their seat belts to buckle up.” If you know someone who doesn’t buckle up, you can help out Utah’s law enforcement by encouraging and reminding that person to wear their seat belt every time they get in the car.

More Utahns are buckling up according to the 2015 Utah Seat Belt Observational Survey conducted by the Utah Department of Public Safety’s Highway Safety Office. Seat belt usage in Utah increased 3.8% to 87.2% in 2015, up from 83.4% in 2014. “We are encouraged by this increase in seat belt use,” said Utah Highway Safety Office Director Kristy Rigby. “But we know there are still many people who put themselves and others in their vehicles at risk by not buckling up. We hope to continue to increase seat belt use through education and enforcement efforts.” Visit <http://highwaysafety.utah.gov> for more information about the seat belt survey.

Last year 256 people died in fatal collisions on Utah roads and highways, 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. Unfortunately, nearly half a million Utah

motorists fail to buckle up, making this one of the leading causes of traffic-related deaths in the state.

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. It is a high visibility enforcement campaign that involves law enforcement agencies statewide. Visit <http://clickitutah.org> for more information on Utah's seat belt laws.

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