



NEWS – Statewide Law Enforcement For Immediate Release January 5, 2015

For more information: NDDOT Communications (701) 328-4559
or contact local law enforcement (contact information can be provided on request.)

Extra seat belt enforcement in January

A seat belt is the single most effective life-saving tool in a vehicle to prevent death and injury in a motor vehicle crash. Yet data shows that in North Dakota some vehicle occupants still resist—or forget—buckling up.

In 2013, nearly 60 percent of motor vehicle fatalities were unbuckled. This month seat belt reminders will increase—in the form of tickets. Patrol officers intend to use citations to remind unbuckled motorists of the importance of seat belts. Extra patrols will be added to focus on enforcing the state’s seat belt laws throughout the month of January. Forty-six law enforcement agencies across the state are participating in this added enforcement, including the North Dakota Highway Patrol.

“Seat belts save lives. If you are involved in a crash, it can be the difference between life and death,” says Colonel Michael Gerhart of the North Dakota Highway Patrol.

Seat belt enforcement will also be emphasized in rural areas of the state where increased seat belt use could do the most to save lives. Imagine being ejected from your vehicle because you were not wearing your seat belt in a rural area. Even if you survive the crash and the impact, you are a long way from help and medical treatment. In 2013, approximately 88 percent of the motor vehicle fatalities in North Dakota happened in rural areas.

Officers are committed to keeping motorists safe. Wearing a seat belt is the best defense in a vehicle crash. Seat belts are designed to protect the brain, spinal cord, upper body, and most importantly, keep you inside the vehicle.

Funding for increased seat belt enforcement is provided by the North Dakota Department of Transportation. Learn more about the efforts to reduce roadway deaths and serious injuries in North Dakota at www.codefortheroad.com.

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