



CITY OF MISSOULA POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release:

Date: May 24, 2017

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Click it or Ticket Missoula Police Plan Seatbelt Enforcement Effort

Officers of the Missoula Police Department are joining the Montana Highway Patrol and local law enforcement agencies across the state with extra patrols through June 4 to enforce seat belt laws and save lives. The effort is part of the national Click It or Ticket law enforcement Memorial Day mobilization. During this traditional kick-off to the summer travel season, law enforcement officers work to help educate the public on seat belt use, enforce Montana seat belt laws and save lives.

"Along with other law enforcement around the state, the Missoula Police Department and Missoula County Sheriff's Department will be increasing patrols in our area," Sergeant Greg Amundsen. "And while our goal is to save lives and increase awareness, if you are pulled over and are not wearing a seat belt, you will be ticketed."

Car crashes are one of the top five causes of death in Montana. In the last five years, an average of 67 percent of those who died on Montana's roadways in vehicles with seat belts were not wearing them. In 2015, Montanans reported wearing seat belts 76 percent of the time—14.1 percent lower than the current national average of 90.1 percent.

In a car crash, there are three main collisions. The first is a vehicle hitting an object; the second is a human hitting an object at the speed the vehicle was going before the collision; the third is internal, where organs collide with other organs and bones. Being properly restrained in a crash can prevent severe and fatal injuries. More than three out of four people ejected during a fatal crash die from their injuries. Wearing a seat belt can reduce the risk of a fatal injury by up to 60 percent.

“That’s what we’re looking to decrease: fatalities,” said Mike Tooley, director of the Montana Department of Transportation. “Participating in Click It or Ticket and increasing patrols during this time move us one step closer to achieving our vision of zero deaths and injuries on our roads.”

Extra traffic safety patrols are funded by the Montana Department of Transportation. This and other enforcement and education campaigns are strategies to reach Vision Zero—zero deaths and zero serious injuries on Montana roadways. For more information about Vision Zero, contact Charity Watt, Montana Department of Transportation, 406-444-3439, cwatt@mt.gov.

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