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Click It or Ticket Campaign Starts May 18

Missoula Police Department Plans Zero-Tolerance Seat Belt Enforcement

Missoula, Montana – Once again, the Missoula City Police Department is reminding motorists of *Click It or Ticket*. As part of the national seat belt enforcement campaign, law enforcement agencies around the country will be stepping up enforcement May 18 to 31, just ahead of one of the busiest travel weekends of the year. Extra patrols are funded by the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program, which uses federal money through the Montana Department of Transportation.

“Every day, unbuckled motorists are losing their lives in motor vehicle crashes,” said Sergeant Greg Amundsen. “As we approach Memorial Day weekend and the summer vacation season, we want to make sure people are doing the one thing that can save them in a crash -- buckling up.”

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, nearly half of the 21,132 passenger vehicle occupants killed in crashes in 2013 were unrestrained. At night, from 6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m., that number soared to 59 percent of those killed. That’s why one focus of the *Click It or Ticket* campaign is nighttime enforcement. Participating law enforcement agencies will be taking a no-excuses approach to seat belt law enforcement, writing citations day and night.

Locally in Montana, 98 unbelted vehicle occupants died in 2013. Nationwide almost twice as many men were killed in crashes as women, and they have lower belt use rates, too. Of the men killed in crashes in 2013, more than half (54%) were unrestrained. For women killed in crashes, 41 percent were not buckled up.

“If you ask the family members of those unrestrained people who were killed in crashes, they’ll tell you—they wish their loved ones had buckled up,” Amundsen said. “The bottom line is that seat belts save lives. If these enforcement crackdowns get people’s attention and get them to buckle up, then we’ve done our job.”

For more information on the *Click It or Ticket* mobilization, please visit www.nhtsa.gov/ciot.