



KANSAS

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‘Click it. Or Ticket.’ Campaign continues over holiday weekend

Police across Kansas will be on look-out for seat belt infractions

The Click it. Or ticket. seat belt campaign will continue over the Memorial Day weekend, with police from law enforcement agencies across Kansas on the lookout for violators of the state’s seat belt law.

“The (Click it. Or ticket.) campaign is about saving lives, and the No. 1 one way you can reduce serious injury or death in the event of a crash is to wear your seat belt,” said Pete Bodyk, chief of the Kansas Department of Transportation’s Bureau of Traffic Safety. “Before the ignition starts in your car, make sure everyone is properly restrained.”

In Kansas there were a total of 2,707 traffic crashes over Memorial Day weekend in the years 2001 through 2005. Those crashes claimed the lives of 16 individuals, and caused 1,094 injuries. Last year, three people were killed and 213 were injured in Kansas as a result of crashes over the holiday weekend.

While seatbelt use has been slowly increasing over the past few years in Kansas, the state still ranks poorly against other states in seatbelt use. Last year, 69 percent of Kansas drivers and passengers were wearing seatbelts during observational surveys in the summer. The national seatbelt use rate is 82 percent. Drivers of pickup trucks were less likely than other Kansans to wear seatbelts. Last year, the compliance rate was only 52 percent.

Of the 428 individuals killed in traffic crashes in the state last year, 70 percent were unrestrained. An even higher percentage of pickup truck drivers and passengers who were killed in traffic crashes were unrestrained, often because they were ejected from pickup trucks involved in roll-over crashes. While rollovers can occur in any kind of passenger vehicle, pickup trucks are twice as likely to roll over as cars because they have a higher center of gravity. Using a seatbelt increases the odds of survival in light trucks by as much as 80 percent in the event of a rollover crash.

Also, as Memorial Day is the unofficial beginning of the summer, it is important to remember the dangers associated with drunk driving. If you are impaired, call a taxi, use mass transit or call a sober friend or family member to get home safely.

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