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Click It. Or Ticket.

Law enforcement on the lookout for unrestrained drivers, passengers

TOPEKA, Kan. — Law enforcement agencies across Kansas will be taking a no-excuses approach to saving lives around this Memorial Day weekend. Tickets will be issued to unbuckled occupants as a harsh reminder of the importance of seat belt use at all times.

More than 50 percent of traffic fatalities in Kansas in 2017 were unrestrained. Many of these individuals could have survived the car crash if they had only worn their seat belt. That's why law enforcement across the state is stepping up enforcement with the Click It. Or Ticket. campaign that runs May 20 through June 2.

"The Click it. Or ticket. campaign isn't about issuing citations, it's about saving lives," said Technical Trooper Ben Gardner, of the Kansas Highway Patrol "Too many people die in motor vehicle crashes who could have survived if they had only buckled up."

It is prohibited to drive or ride as a passenger in a motor vehicle without wearing a seat belt for a good reason. In 2017, 53 percent of the 316 deaths from automobile crashes in Kansas were not buckled. Pick-up truck drivers, young adults and males are among some of the worst offenders and most at-risk.

"Frustratingly, there are still people out there who do not take that extra second to buckle up," said Chris Bortz, KDOT Traffic Safety Program Manager. "Any adult not wearing their seat belt could be issued a \$30 traffic citation. Make a better decision and buckle up, every trip, every time."

In 2018, the Kansas observed seat belt usage was 84 percent, below the national average of 90 percent, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Education coupled with enforcement can raise this rate and ultimately save lives.

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