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Click It or Ticket is Just Ahead

Beginning on Wednesday, May 18th, and continuing through Tuesday, May 31st, travelers can expect increased police presence on city streets as the Coffeyville Police Department joins other law enforcement agencies in aggressively enforcing Kansas occupant restraint and other traffic laws as part of the 2020 Kansas ***Click It or Ticket*** campaign. This activity is supported by a grant from the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT). Enforcement will occur around the clock. Seatbelt use diminishes after nightfall, meaning the likelihood of unbelted crash injuries and deaths rise during those hours.

Fact: If the driver of a vehicle is not belted, only about 20% of the front-outboard passengers are belted. Conversely, if the driver is belted that about 98% of the front-outboard passengers were observed to be belted. As for child passenger safety, Kansans ensure appropriate restraint with its youngest ones as children ages 0-4, are buckled into child safety seats at the rate of 98%. However, only 87% of 5- to 14-year old's are properly restrained. This means that 1 out of 8 Kansas children, aged 5-14, are made vulnerable while traveling by the failure of their drivers to restrain them. Drivers, please make the safe choice- every trip, every time.

The aim of ***Click It or Ticket*** is simple: to effectively reduce the number of preventable deaths and injuries that occur when unbelted drivers and passengers are involved in traffic crashes. About 345 persons are involved in 170 crashes each day in Kansas. Only 7% of those that are unbelted are likely to escape without injury. Half of all fatalities occur among those who are not wearing a seat belt. While seat belts may not always prevent a serious or fatal injury, certainly no other piece of equipment within the vehicle provides more protection.

Drivers will be met with strict enforcement of both the Kansas Safety Belt Use Act and the Kansas Child Passenger Safety Act. These statutes require that all vehicle occupants must be appropriately restrained. Law enforcement officers can stop vehicles and issue tickets when they observe occupants riding unrestrained or without proper restraint. Occupants, ages 14 and over, are cited individually. If a passenger under the age of 14

is observed to be unrestrained the driver will be cited. The fine for an adult (18+) seat belt violation is \$30. The fine for a youth (14-17) violation is \$60, while the fine for a child (0-13) restraint violation is \$60 plus a court cost charge of as much as \$85.00

Children under the age of four must be correctly secured in an approved child safety seat. Children four through seven must be securely belted into an approved booster seat. Once a child is taller than 4 feet 9 inches and/or weighs more than 80 pounds the booster seat may be removed. All children, ages eight through 13, must wear seat belts. In addition, Kansas law prohibits persons under the age of 14 from riding in any part of a vehicle not intended for carrying passengers, such as a pickup bed. For answers to child safety restraint questions and the location of the nearest safety seat fitting station, or safety seat technician, contact the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office at 1-800-416-2522, or visit <https://www.ktsro.org/resources>.

Kansas' overall adult seat belt compliance rate is 85% and ranges, by county, from 62% to 97%, with occupants in rural counties generally less likely to buckle up than those in urban counties. According to KDOT, this rural-urban difference in rates of buckling up is especially problematic because rural roadway conditions are often less forgiving than those in urban areas, and the consequences of driver misjudgment – such as unsafe speed and failure to buckle up – are likely to be more severe in the event of a crash. Almost two-thirds of Kansas' fatality crashes occur on rural roadways while these roads account for only one-third of all crashes.

According to Chief Bromley, “I want people in Coffeyville to remember that when drivers don't buckle up or require their passengers to buckle up, they are assuring themselves, their family, friends and others, that no circumstance will arise that will activate seat belts. In other words, there will be no deer, sleepiness, chemical impairment, kids fighting in the back seat, etc. in their vehicle or in the other vehicles they meet on the road.

“I want people to know that, day or night, Coffeyville Police Department is committed to aggressively ticketing violators of adult seat belt and child safety laws, as well as other traffic infractions, which make the need for occupant restraint so necessary. The stop will be inconvenient, your vehicle and driver's license numbers will likely be checked for outstanding warrants and insurance, and you'll pay at least \$30 to the court. So, use your belt, every trip, every time.”

Stay safe.