



LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE

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Click It or Ticket – save your money, save your life

Wearing your seat belt during Louisiana's Click It or Ticket campaign can prevent you from getting a costly traffic ticket, but there's a much broader purpose for the statewide law enforcement wave taking place now through November 29.

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"There's a double benefit to wearing a seat belt – it's also the best way to prevent you from getting seriously injured or killed if you're in a crash," explained Lisa Freeman, Executive Director of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission. "Our mission is saving lives, but we've found that for some people, it takes the threat of a ticket to get them to buckle up."

Across Louisiana, law enforcement agencies are putting extra patrols on the road during holiday travel, when traffic usually is higher. Troopers, deputies, and police officers have been trained to spot anyone not wearing a seat belt, and they are giving out tickets.

Louisiana law says all drivers and passengers in a motor vehicle must wear a seat belt, and children must be in an age- and size-appropriate safety seat. A first-time offender can be fined \$50 for a violation.

Louisiana's seat belt rate is improving, but it is below the national average. The latest Louisiana seat belt usage survey shows 87.5 percent of drivers and passengers are properly restrained. That compares to the national average of 90.7 percent, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Both surveys are from 2019.

Last year, 49 percent of all drivers and passengers who died in a motor vehicle crash in Louisiana were not wearing a seat belt, according to the Center for Analytics and Research in Transportation Safety at LSU. So far in November, at least 10 people in Louisiana who were not wearing a seat belt have died, according to reports from Louisiana State Police and other law enforcement agencies.

"It's clear that seat belts save lives," Freeman said. "Wearing a seat belt greatly reduces your chance of suffering a serious or fatal injury in the event of a crash, so it makes sense to buckle up every trip, every seat, every time. If it takes a \$50 ticket to get that point across, it's worth it to keep people safe."

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