



LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE

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Click It or Ticket: seat belts aren't just for the front seat

Law enforcement officers across the state are encouraging drivers and passengers to wear their seat belts, and the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission is reminding people in the back seat they could also be cited for failing to buckle up.

Click It or Ticket, the national seat belt campaign that coincides with the Memorial Day holiday period, is in force in Louisiana through June 6. A first-offense violation of the seat belt law costs an offender \$50, and subsequent violations are \$75 each.

LHSC Executive Director Lisa Freeman said too many back-seat passengers don't think the seat belt law applies to them.

"I've heard people say, 'I don't have to buckle up if I'm in the back seat,' and that simply isn't true," Freeman said. "The law is very clear that every person in every seat must wear a seat belt or face getting a ticket."

A 2019 LHSC study shows that 87.5 percent of drivers and front-seat passengers use their seat belts. However, the study says seat belt usage drops to 68.1 percent among people riding in the back seat.

Nationally in 2019, 9,466 unbuckled passenger vehicle occupants were killed in vehicle crashes, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. In Louisiana, 47 percent of drivers and 55 percent of passengers who were killed in a crash in 2019 were not wearing their seat belts, according to the Center for Research and Analytics in Transportation Safety at LSU.

"There's nothing magical about the back seat that will save you from getting a ticket or from being seriously injured in a crash if you don't wear a seat belt," Freeman said.

Freeman also made a specific appeal to drivers and passengers in pickup trucks, which have a higher center of gravity and are at greater risk of rolling over in a crash.

"On average, drivers and passengers in pickup trucks are nearly 10 percent less likely than people in other vehicles to wear their seat belts in Louisiana," she said. "The 'Click It or Ticket' message to drivers and passengers in trucks, cars, SUVs, and vans is simple: buckle up, stay safe, and enjoy the holiday weekend."

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