



The Red Light Alert

Did You Know?

- In fatal crashes, 73 percent of the passenger vehicle occupants who were totally ejected were killed. Safety belts are effective in preventing total ejections.
- Safety belt use has increased significantly in the past few years, from 58 percent in 1994 to 90.5 percent in 2004.
- In 2000, the deaths and serious injuries prevented by safety belts resulted in savings of \$50 billion in medical care, lost productivity and other injury-related costs.
- The general public pays nearly three-quarters of all crash costs primarily through insurance premiums, taxes, delays and lost productivity.

SAFETY BELT USE TOPS 90 PERCENT; REACHES RECORD HIGH

Last week the Michigan State Police announced Michigan is now the fifth state in the nation and the first state east of California to achieve a 90 percent or greater safety belt use rate.

According to a direct observation survey conducted by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) during the most recent safety belt enforcement mobilization, safety belt use in Michigan stands at 90.5 percent.

At this rate, Michigan now boasts the fifth highest belt usage in the country, behind California, Hawaii, Washington and Oregon.

Colonel Tadarial J. Sturdivant, director of the Michigan State Police, praised the efforts of Michigan's law enforcement officers and traffic safety supporters for reaching this milestone. He said, "Thanks to the state's primary safety belt law and the thousands of dedicated law enforcement officers

at police departments across the state, Michigan has reached a level of safety once thought to be unobtainable."

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm applauded the increased rate of compliance. "For every 1 percent increase in safety belt use, 10 traffic deaths and 130 serious injuries will be prevented annually," Granholm said. "When Michigan residents wear seat belts they are ensuring their own health and safety."

Before the summer travel season, safety belt use was at approximately 84 percent. It has been climbing steadily throughout the summer from nearly 87 percent at the end of May to 88.3 percent at the beginning of August.

Traffic safety officials credit expanded safety belt enforcement zones and intensive, widespread publicity efforts for the state's continued increase.



According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), belt use is also on the rise across the country, with a record 80 percent of Americans buckling up in 2004.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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Editor's Note: OHSP Press Release dated September 30, 2004. Edited for space.

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We're On The Web!
www.paamtrafficsafety.com

TRAFFIC SAFETY FORUM SITE

The Traffic Safety Forum is an electronic message group set up to keep prosecutors and assistant prosecutors in Michigan current with legal information as well as to provide a forum for the discussion about cases, motions, and other legal issues.

At this site there can be an exchange of ideas, as well as documents and PowerPoint presentations. The site is secure from the public and open only to prosecutors and assistant prosecutors. Currently, there are 105 members. On the site there are PowerPoint presentations dealing with .08, a chart regarding The Driver Responsibility Act, a generic PowerPoint Presentation on an OUIL (old law) case, and circuit court cases supporting the motorcycle helmet law.

If you have any questions, or want to get onto the site, email me at wallaced@michigan.gov or call 517-334-6060 ext. 827. Give me your name, email address, and where you work. I'll then send the invitation to you to join the Forum.



This material was developed through a project funded by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

23,000 Safety Belt Citations Issued During *Buckle Up or Pay Up, Click It or Ticket* Labor Day Enforcement Effort

A summer-ending *Buckle Up or Pay Up, Click It or Ticket* safety belt enforcement effort resulted in more than 23,000 safety belt citations issued to unbuckled motorists.

According to statistics reported to the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP), 23,303 safety belt citations were issued between Aug. 30 and Sept. 12. Of that number, 341 were for improperly buckled children under age 4.

Officers also arrested 484 drunk drivers, 317 individuals on felony charges and 2,239 others for misdemeanor charges. In addition, 19,512 citations were issued for traffic violations

“Traffic enforcement is good police work,” Michael L. Prince

such as speeding and driving on a suspended license.

“Traffic enforcement is good police work,” said **Michael L. Prince**, OHSP division director. “Not only did this campaign encourage more people to buckle up, officers also removed drunk drivers from the roads, apprehended fugitives and felons, and identified motorists with suspended or revoked licenses.”

OHSP coordinated the *Buckle Up or Pay Up, Click It or Ticket* mobilization, providing federal traffic safety funds for overtime patrols and paid advertising to promote awareness of the initiative. By providing law enforcement agencies with overtime funding, officers can concentrate on safety belt enforcement without taking away from their day-to-day duties.

Agencies in 31 counties conducted safety belt enforcement zones during the enforcement effort that helped increase Michigan's safety belt use rate to 90.5 percent. Michigan is now the fifth state in the nation, and the first state east of California, to achieve a 90 percent or greater safety belt use rate.

The next statewide traffic safety enforcement effort is a crackdown on drunk drivers, December 20, 2004 – January 2, 2005.

For a citation breakdown by county, visit www.michigan.gov/ohsp.

Editor's Note: OHSP Press Release Dated October 6, 2004