



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NEWS

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH – GOVERNOR

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CONTACTS:

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Abby Ottenhoff | 312/814.3158 |
| Rebecca Rausch | 217/782.7355 |
| David Rudduck | 312/814.6721 |
| Marisa Kollias (IDOT) | 312/814.4693 |
| Mike Claffey (IDOT) | 312/814.3957 |
| Brian Williamson (IDOT) | 217/558.0517 |

Gov. Blagojevich announces largest Click It or Ticket enforcement campaign in state history for May

IDOT, ISP, and local police agencies aim to reach higher goals for seat belt use; Fatalities down to historic lows since the Governor signed law in 2003

SPRINGFIELD– Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Illinois State Police (ISP), and local law enforcement agencies will conduct the largest Click It or Ticket (CIOT) mobilization in the state's history during the month of May. While Illinois motorists have exceeded the 90 percent mark for seatbelt usage, the aim of the new campaign is to save more lives and by pushing for 100 percent compliance.

“Law enforcement, community leaders and traffic safety advocates across the state have worked hard to increase safety belt compliance, and we should all be proud of their success,” said Gov. Blagojevich. “Every life counts, that’s why it is imperative that we continue to raise the safety belt compliance rate beyond 90 percent. We know that every percentage increase represents more lives saved.”

The announcement comes at the 5th anniversary of Gov. Blagojevich’s signing the primary safety belt law in 2003. Statewide safety belt compliance has increased 14 percentage points from 76.2 percent in 2003 to 90.1 percent in 2007. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the increase in safety belt compliance also represents \$459,588,303 in economic costs saved.

“With nearly 1 out of every 10 motorists unbuckled on Illinois roadways we still have work to do,” said Secretary of Transportation Milton R. Sees. “Regular safety belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes. When worn correctly, safety belts reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants by 45 percent – and by 60 percent – in pickup trucks, SUVs and mini-vans.”

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"The Illinois State Police (ISP) is honored to commemorate the five-year anniversary of Gov. Blagojevich's signing of the primary seat belt law," said ISP Director Larry G. Trent. "Countless lives have been saved by simply requiring drivers to wear their seat belt. Illinois presently has the lowest fatality numbers since 1924, which is a direct reflection of this important law that continues to save lives."

During this Click It or Ticket mobilization over 500 local, state and county law enforcement agencies will dedicate over 15,000 hours enforcement details between May 1 and June 1, 2008. The Illinois Click It or Ticket mobilization will be supported by a projected \$800,000 in paid advertising to convince all motorists to buckle up while driving both day and night.

NHTSA estimates safety belt compliance drops by approximately 10 percentage points at night. Even though only 25 percent of travel occurs at night, the fatality rate per vehicle mile of travel is about three times higher at night than during the day. Nationwide, nearly half of motor vehicle fatalities occur at night. IDOT's Division of Traffic Safety (DTS) will focus on raising the nighttime safety belt compliance to 90.1 percent by challenging law enforcement agencies to hold 25 percent of enforcement at night.

For more information on the Click It or Ticket campaign, or to download outreach materials for use in your community, please visit www.buckleupillinois.org.