



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **NEARLY 14,500 DIDN'T CLICK IT, GOT A TICKET DURING STATEWIDE SEAT BELT ENFORCEMENT EFFORT**

ST. PAUL — Minnesota's "Click It or Ticket" seat belt enforcement campaign generated 14,487 seat belt citations during May. The Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) coordinated the *Safe & Sober* effort. A similar enforcement effort last May yielded 12,095 tickets.

Citation reports have been filed by 303 enforcement agencies. The final ticket tally is expected to grow as more agencies submit reports. The seat belt enforcement included a one-week campaign in early May conducted by greater Minnesota agencies that yielded 2,647 citations and a statewide effort May 22–June 4 that produced 11,840 tickets. A seat belt citation costs \$25 and can ramp up to \$115 with court costs and administrative fees.

"There's no good excuse for not wearing a seat belt," says Kathy Swanson, director of OTS. "Any excuse for not buckling up won't do you much good if you crash."

The Minnesota State Patrol issued 2,379 seat belt citations. Among local agencies, St. Paul Police Department lead with 801 citations — followed by the police departments of Richfield (440), Roseville (405) and Minneapolis (393). In greater Minnesota, citation leaders were the Cass County Sheriff's Office (301) and the police departments of Bemidji (158), St. Peter (132), Red Wing (129), and Baxter (95).

In 2005, 440 vehicle occupants were killed in crashes in Minnesota and over half — 225 — were not buckled up. OTS estimates half of those killed could have survived had they been wearing seat belts. Minnesota's seat belt use rate is 84 percent.

Ongoing enforcement focusing on speeding and impaired driver behavior is planned throughout the state this summer — the deadliest period on Minnesota roads due to the combination of increased traffic driving at faster speeds and a spike in impaired driving.

*Safe & Sober* is an enforcement and education program funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and designed to reduce traffic deaths and serious injuries.

**Buckle Up. Click It or Ticket.**

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and Gambling  
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