

Seat Belt Fact Sheet

Minnesota Statute 169.686 requires that a seat belt be worn by the driver and all passengers of a vehicle. Law enforcement personnel can and have been stopping people who are not wearing their seat belts and are giving out tickets for violations.

From 2005 to 2007 in the Twin Cities alone, there were 156 unbelted traffic deaths and 426 unbelted serious injuries with an economic impact of \$207,300,000. In the rest of Minnesota, there were an additional 614 unbelted traffic deaths, 1,298 serious injuries with an economic impact of \$791,700,00.

Seat belts are the simplest and most effective way to prevent death or injury in the event of a vehicle related crash – especially on Minnesota roads plagued with speeding, distracted drivers and impaired drivers. Seat belt use can reduce the risk of serious injury and death by 40 to 60 percent according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

In a crash, odds are six times greater for injury to an occupant of a vehicle if they are not seat belted. An unbelted motorist can crash into the windshield, slam into or injure other passengers, or even be ejected from a vehicle and killed.

Seat belts restrain motorists in the vehicle's protected passenger compartment, giving them room to live in the event of a crash.

Some scary statistics include:

- Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for Minnesotans ages 1 to 34.
- Each year, about 200 unbelted motorists are killed, and another 400 unbelted motorists suffer life-altering injuries.
- Nearly 80 percent of unbelted traffic deaths occur on Greater Minnesota roads.
- Minnesotans that are least likely to buckle up are young drivers, particularly males, and residents of Greater Minnesota. Motorists ages 15-29 account for 45 percent of all unbelted deaths, and 55 percent of serious injuries – yet this group represents only 25 percent of all licensed drivers.
- Many unbelted traffic deaths occur at night – more than 60 percent of nighttime crash victims are not belted.
- Each year, 80 percent of drivers who have been drinking who are killed in crashes are not wearing their seat belts.
- An estimated 1,900 people each year could have avoided hospital treatment if they had been wearing a seat belt.
- Long term medical costs for unbelted persons who are injured are more expensive than belted persons who are injured in vehicle accidents.

The LMSC encourages all City employees to wear your seat belts at all times when in a vehicle. Encourage your co-workers, your family members and your friends to NOT be statistics of an unbelted motorist. Remember – Safety is NO Accident!