



STATE OF DELAWARE  
**OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY**  
P.O. BOX 1321  
DOVER, DELAWARE 19903-1321  
302-672-7642  
[www.ohs.delaware.gov](http://www.ohs.delaware.gov)

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

CONTACT: Andrea Summers  
Community Relations Officer  
672-7642 (w) 943-7293 (c)

**75 More Cited for Seat Belt Violations During Seat Belt  
Mobilization**

*Dover* – In the first two weeks of a statewide enforcement and awareness mobilization aimed at encouraging more Delawareans to buckle up, officers have issued 122 citations for seat belt violations. Seventy-five (75) of them came during the second week of enforcement (August 10 – 16) and is nearly double the number of citations for violations of Delaware’s seat belt law than were issued during the first week.

In addition to the 75 seat belt citations issued last week, officers cited 9 for speeding violations, arrested 1 for DUI and cited another 29 for other traffic violations. Drivers who don’t wear seat belts are also more likely to exhibit other risky behaviors like driving aggressively or while impaired by drugs and/or alcohol.

The enforcement and awareness mobilization is part of a four-month long safety initiative focused on saving lives by increasing seat belt use in the First State. A plan was created after results from observational seat belt surveys conducted by the Office of Highway Safety in June revealed that the state’s 2009 statewide use rate declined from 91% last year to 88% this year. Additionally, 66% of drivers and passengers killed since January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year have not been buckled up.

As part of the mobilization eight county and municipal police agencies are conducting either traffic safety patrols and/or checkpoints, both day and night, looking for unbuckled drivers and passengers. The sustained enforcement effort will continue through the end of November, purposely including the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

Delaware law requires drivers and *all* passengers, including those in the back seat, to wear a seat belt. An officer can pull over a driver if he sees any person not wearing one. Delaware's law also requires correct use of the seat belt...which means the shoulder belt must be worn over the shoulder and not under the arm. Officers will be issuing citations for seat belt violations as part of a zero tolerance policy. The ticket, which goes to the driver no matter who is unbuckled in the vehicle, is a \$25.00 fine plus court administrative fees, which can eventually total more than \$70.00.

Participating agencies include: Bridgeville Police, Harrington Police, Laurel Police, Milford Police, Millsboro Police, New Castle County Police, Ocean View Police, and Seaford Police/ Seat belt usage declined by 4% each in New Castle and Sussex Counties, while the usage rate actually increased by 1% in Kent County.

For weekly updates on OHS's seat belt mobilization results please visit the Newsroom on the OHS website at [www.ohs.delaware.gov](http://www.ohs.delaware.gov) . While there, bookmark the site in your RSS Reader. You can also follow OHS updates on our activities on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/DEHighwaySafe](http://www.twitter.com/DEHighwaySafe) .

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