



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**

**NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 31, 2009

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

## **Seat Belt Enforcement Results for Month 1 of Mobilization**

*Dover* – Officers participating in a stepped up enforcement effort to save lives by getting more Delawareans to buckle up have issued 239 citations for seat belt violations in the first month of the campaign.

The enforcement and awareness mobilization, which launched August 1<sup>st</sup>, is part of a four-month long safety initiative 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, 64% of drivers and passengers killed since January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year have not been buckled up.

In addition to the seat belt citations issued during the first month of enforcement, officers have also issued 9 citations for violations of Delaware's child restraint law, cited 70 for speeding, arrested one for DUI and cited another 198 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.

As part of the mobilization eight county and municipal police agencies, primarily in Sussex and New Castle County, are conducting either traffic safety patrols and/or checkpoints looking for unbuckled drivers and passengers. Enforcement is occurring both day and night and 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) .

###