



Truckers Not Belted In

Truckers Need to "Click It or Ticket"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 19, 2005

EAST LANSING. Officers of the Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division will be participating in the seat belt mobilization, focusing on seat belt compliance for truck drivers. The Motor Carrier Division has a zero-tolerance approach with respect to unbelted truck drivers.

While Michigan enjoys the benefits of an all-time high compliance rate for seat belt use in passenger cars, truck drivers in Michigan and nationally are well behind in complying with the seat belt law. Studies show that only about 48% of drivers operating large trucks buckle up, while passenger car drivers in Michigan are at or above 90% usage rate. The national average for seat belt usage by passenger car drivers is 79%.

In 2003, fifty percent of the truck drivers killed in crashes nation wide were not wearing their seat belt. Additionally, almost 80% of the 171 truck drivers ejected from their vehicle during a crash were not wearing their seat belt. Truck drivers are much more likely to survive a crash if wearing their seat belt, as well as maintain control of their vehicle during a crash.

For more information, log onto www.fmsca.dot.gov/safetybelt.

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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www.michigan.gov/msp

MYTH 1

Safety belts are uncomfortable and restrict movement.

FACT

A few seconds adjusting the safety belt at the beginning of your trip will prevent discomfort. You will also find that safety belt extenders are available on most domestic vehicles. Your local truck dealer can help you locate the correct safety belt extender for your vehicle.

MYTH 2

Wearing a safety belt is a personal decision that doesn't affect anyone else.

FACT

Not wearing a safety belt can certainly affect your family and loved ones. It can also affect other motorists since wearing a safety belt can help you avoid losing control of your truck in a crash. It's the law; Federal regulations require commercial vehicle drivers to buckle up.

MYTH 3

Safety belts prevent your escape from a burning or submerged vehicle.

FACT

Safety belts can keep you from being knocked unconscious, improving your chances of escape. Fire or submersion occurs in less than 5% of fatal large truck crashes.

MYTH 4

It's better to be thrown clear of the wreckage in the event of a crash.

FACT

An occupant of a vehicle is four times as likely to be fatally injured when thrown from the vehicle. In 2003, 171 truck drivers died when they were ejected from their cabs during a crash.

MYTH 5

It takes too much time to fasten your safety belt 20 times a day.

FACT

Buckling up takes about three seconds. Even buckling up 20 times a day requires only one minute.

MYTH 6

Good truck drivers don't need to wear safety belts.

FACT

Good drivers usually don't cause collisions, but it's possible that during your career you will be involved in a crash caused by a bad driver, bad weather, mechanical failure, or tire blowout. Wearing a safety belt prevents injuries and fatalities by preventing ejection, and by protecting your head and spinal cord.

MYTH 7

A large truck will protect you. Safety belts are unnecessary.

FACT

In 2003, 620 drivers of large trucks died in truck crashes and 309 of those truck drivers were not wearing safety belts. Wearing a safety belt decreases your chance of death or injury by up to 50%.

MYTH 8

Safety belts aren't necessary for low-speed driving.

FACT

In a frontal collision occurring at 30 mph, an unbelted person continues to move forward at 30 mph causing him/her to hit the windshield at about 30 mph. This is the same velocity a person falling from the top of a three story building would experience upon impact with the ground.

MYTH 9

A lap belt offers sufficient protection.

FACT

The lap and shoulder belt design has been proven to hold a driver securely behind the wheel in the event of a crash, greatly increasing the driver's ability to maintain control of the vehicle and minimizing the chance for serious injury or death.