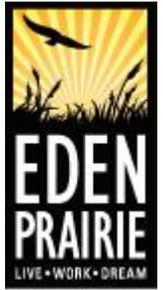


NEWS RELEASE

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EDEN PRAIRIE & BLOOMINGTON POLICE PREPARE FOR DEADLY DRIVING SEASON

Click It or Ticket Campaign Kicks Off May 18

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — Unbelted motorists account for nearly half of Minnesota’s traffic deaths each year. To counter this trend and stop preventable deaths and injuries, Eden Prairie and Bloomington Police officers will conduct enhanced seat belt patrols May 18–31 as part of a statewide Department of Public Safety (DPS) *Safe & Sober — Click It or Ticket* enforcement effort.

Statewide over the past three years, preliminary data shows 1,096 motorists were killed in crashes — 518 were unbelted — and another 1,151 unbelted motorists were seriously injured.

“Increased seat belt patrols are essential to preventing needless tragedies,” says Eden Prairie Police Sergeant Pete Vosbeek. “But enforcement can’t save lives alone — every motorist should insist their passengers buckle up to ensure a safe ride.”

A focus of the enforcement will be teens and young adults — the groups least likely to buckle up and overrepresented in traffic deaths. Statewide each year, motorists ages 15–29 account for 45 percent of all unbelted deaths, yet this group represents only 25 percent of all licensed drivers. Of these unbelted deaths, 80 percent occur in Greater Minnesota. This same age group accounts for 55 percent of all unbelted serious injuries — 70 percent occur in Greater Minnesota.

Around 400 law enforcement agencies across Minnesota will participate in the enforcement effort coordinated by DPS as a component of the state’s *Toward Zero Death* initiative (TZD). TZD is a multi-agency approach to address traffic issues regionally through enforcement, education, engineering and emergency trauma care.

Buckle Up — *Click It or Ticket*.

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