

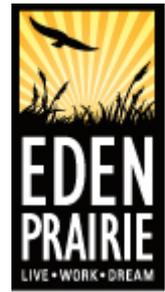
NEWS RELEASE

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EDEN PRAIRIE AND BLOOMINGTON POLICE OFFICERS CRACK DOWN DURING DEADLIEST DRIVING SEASON

Over 100 Citations Issued During Safe & Sober “Click It or Ticket” Program

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — Police officers from Eden Prairie and Bloomington issued over 100 seat belt citations during this year’s “Click It or Ticket” campaign from May 19 through June 1.

More than 400 agencies statewide participated in the “Click it or Ticket” program which is designed to get drivers thinking about safe driving practices before the summer driving season, the deadliest time on the roads.

“Until every motorist buckles up every ride, Minnesota will continue to see unbelted traffic deaths accounting for more than 200 deaths a year,” said Pete Vosbeek, sergeant for the Eden Prairie Police Department. “A seat belt is your best defense on the road against speeding, distracted and impaired drivers.”

Officers also conducted nighttime patrols of belt use, as the majority of fatalities where seat belts are not in use occur between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) 2004–2006 data reports show there were 306 vehicle occupant traffic deaths during nighttime hours (9 p.m. – 3 a.m.) and 202 — 66 percent — were not belted.

Of 1,274 vehicle occupants killed in crashes from 2004–2006, more than half were not wearing seat belts. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) estimates around half of those killed would have survived if they were buckled up.

The *Safe & Sober* effort is coordinated by the Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety 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 and response.

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