

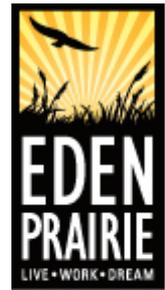
# NEWS RELEASE

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## **EDEN PRAIRIE POLICE ENHANCE SEAT BELT ENFORCEMENT PATROLS *Safe & Sober “Click It or Ticket” Program Begins***

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — To combat an annual Minnesota death toll of around 200 unbelted motorists, Eden Prairie Police will ramp up patrols May 19–June 1 for a statewide Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) Safe & Sober “Click It or Ticket” seat belt enforcement sweep.

The enforcement effort is part of a nationwide campaign leading into the summer driving season, the deadliest time on the roads, and will include approximately 400 participating agencies statewide.

A seat belt citation is \$25 and can cost as much as \$115 with court and administrative fees. Lieutenant Greg Weber of the Eden Prairie Police Department says that there is potentially a much higher cost to not wearing a seat belt.

“Unbelted traffic deaths and serious injuries impact every community in the state, including ours,” says Lieutenant Greg Weber of the Eden Prairie Police Department. “When you’re not belted, your chances of surviving crash are cut in half.”

Unbelted motorists account for over half of all vehicle occupant deaths each year. During 2004–2006 in Minnesota there were 1,274 vehicle occupants killed in crashes and 658 were not wearing seat belts. DPS estimates around half of those killed would have survived if they were buckled up.

Eden Prairie Police will also conduct special nighttime seat belt enforcement patrols. DPS 2004–2006 data reports there were 306 vehicle occupant traffic deaths during nighttime hours (9 p.m. – 3 a.m.) and 202 — 66 percent — were not belted.

During the 2007 spring seat belt enforcement sweep, Eden Prairie Police issued 190 seat belt citations.

The Safe & Sober effort is coordinated by the DPS 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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