

reporter

a publication of the Tennessee Traffic Safety Resource Service

January - June 2004

Driving after drinking alcohol or using illicit drugs is a serious concern, especially in the summertime, when many young people attend parties and events where alcohol and drugs may be readily available.

The only way to guarantee that you are driving safely is to avoid alcohol and illicit drugs completely. Even one drink can slow reflexes and make you sluggish as it alters your blood alcohol concentration.

Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk Or Drugged

Factors such as gender, weight, rate of alcohol consumption, alcohol tolerance and amount of sleep cause each person to react to alcohol differently. To ensure you are safe while behind the wheel of a car, you should not have a single drink or any illicit drug.

Show all of your friends that drinking alcohol or using drugs isn't necessary to have an amazing party. Spread the word against underage drinking and you'll be helping to save lives. To obtain more information on substance free events, visit National Organizations for Youth Safety at <http://www.noys.org> or NHTSA at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>.

Don't Forget: You Drink and Drive. You Lose. ■



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BUCKLE YOUR BELTS



Always buckle your seat belt. Seat belts are your best protection in case of a crash, especially if you get into an accident with a large vehicle such as a truck. Trucks require a greater stopping distance and can seriously hurt you if your car is struck from behind. However, your seat belt will keep you from striking the steering wheel or windshield, being thrown around, and from being ejected from the car. Wearing a seat belt is the single most important thing you can do to save your life, especially in a crash with a large truck. **CLICK IT or TICKET- We're Going To Save Lives! ■**

NEW OCCUPANT PROTECTION LAWS IN EFFECT JULY 1, 2004

Primary Seat Belt and Child Restraint Laws Promise to Save Lives

Effective July 1, two new occupant protection laws go into effect designed to save lives and reduce the economic impact resulting from traffic crashes on Tennessee highways. Law enforcement officials will begin executing Tennessee's primary seat belt law and new provisions to the existing child restraint law just in time to improve safety during the heavily traveled summer vacation season.

Motor vehicle-related injuries kill more people each year than any other type of injury in the United States. Using safety belts is the single most effective means of reducing fatal and nonfatal injuries in motor vehicle crashes. The Center for Disease Control indicates a 14 percent greater decrease in motor vehicle fatalities in states with primary safety belt laws than in states with secondary laws.

Currently, a quarter of Tennesseans are not buckling up. With the implementation of a primary seat belt law, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration estimates that the state will save 81 lives, prevent 886 serious injuries, and save \$181 million in related costs each year.

The implementation of two new occupant protection laws provides an increased opportunity for the importance of safety to be communicated to motorists, according to Chuck Taylor, the Director of Tennessee's Governor's Highway Safety Office. "Our efforts in modifying driver behavior is greatly enhanced by these two new life saving pieces of legislation." ■

Beginning July 1, in Tennessee

- Law enforcement officers can ticket drivers for not wearing a seat belt.
- All motor vehicle passengers must use a seat belt or the driver can be ticketed.
- Children under the age of one or weighing twenty pounds or less when in a motor vehicle must be in the rear seat (if available, or according to the child safety restraint system or vehicle manufacturer's instructions) of the vehicle in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system.
- Children ages one through three and weighing greater than twenty pounds when in a motor vehicle must be in the rear seat (if available, or according to the child safety restraint system or vehicle manufacturer's instructions) of the vehicle in a forward facing child passenger restraint system.
- Children ages four through eight and measuring less than five feet tall when in a passenger motor vehicle must be in the rear seat (if available, or according to the child safety restraint system or vehicle manufacturer's instructions) using a belt positioning system (booster seat).
- Children ages nine through twelve and measuring five feet tall or more when in a passenger motor vehicle must use a seat belt system. It is recommended that the child be placed in the rear seat. ■

PARENTS: DON'T USE SHIELD-STYLE CAR SEATS!

There's more evidence against shield-style child car seats. Children are at nearly eight times higher risk of serious injury when riding in these seats according to a new study conducted at the Children's National Medical Center in Washington D.C.

Shield-style car seats use a detachable shield to restrain a small child and have been linked in some studies and lawsuits to serious injuries in crashes. Many car seat makers have stopped selling them

The study is a warning flag for parents: Invest in a new model of car seat that meets recent Federal guidelines. Don't use an older model that's been handed down or that you've found in a thrift shop. Don't even use a new model of shield car seat; one manufacturer still produces them, but they are not considered by many experts to be safe. It is marketing them for children between 30 and 40 pounds.

Federal investigations of shield booster seats have demonstrated the lack of safety. A series of rollover crash tests showed that dummies weighing less than 40 pounds were more likely to be ejected if they rode in these seats. They also reported that babies riding in shield booster seats had greater trauma to the baby's upper body, abdomen and head.

Based on these studies, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) discourage the use of shield booster seats. They do advise using forward-facing car seats that secure the child with a five-point seat belt and harness. To learn more about this study, see the March issue of Pediatrics: vol 113: pp153-158, Edgerton, E. ■



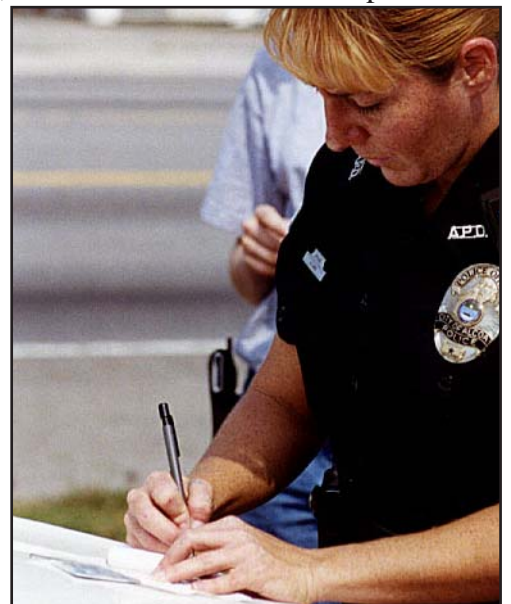
UNPRECEDENTED LAW ENFORCEMENT CAMPAIGN TO IMPROVE SAFETY OF TENNESSEE'S ROADWAYS

Nashville, Tenn. - The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Southeast Region today launched its *"100 Days of Summer HEAT"* traffic enforcement campaign. The initiative combines the efforts of each State Highway Patrol, State Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division, county sheriffs and local police departments in focusing enforcement on three main traffic violations: speeding, impaired driving, and failure to use safety belts.

"Never before has such a wide range of agencies from multiple states across an entire region combined their efforts to make our roadways safer," said Terry Schiavone, NHTSA Southeast Region Administrator. "Because the summer months are particularly dangerous for travelers, law enforcement leadership in this region has come together to crack down on all motorists, including commercial motor vehicle operators who are speeding, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or not wearing a safety belt."

The *"100 Days of Summer HEAT"* traffic enforcement campaign is a national model focusing on law enforcement to reduce the injuries and needless deaths that occur each year due to speeding, impaired driving or failure to wear safety belts. Strict crackdowns have proven to be the most effective way to keep the region's roads safe. "Each summer we tragically lose on an average more on than 300 people in Tennessee to needless traffic crashes," said Chuck Taylor, director of the Governor's Highway Safety Office. "The fatalities and injuries that occur on our highways each day are totally unacceptable. Tennessee's *100 Days of Summer HEAT* campaign will make our roads safer during the heavily traveled summer months."

The latest figures indicate that speeding and impaired driving during the summer months claimed 2,563 lives across the Southeast. In Tennessee alone, an average of more than 160 people were killed during the summer month because of speed-related crashes. ■



EVENTS / CALENDAR

July 2004

04-06, You Drink & Drive, You Lose
Mobilization
25-28, TN Health & Safety Congress

August 2004

31-Sept.6, Stop on Red Week

For more details on these events, please
visit <http://www.tntrafficsafety.org>
and click on calendar.

**New Course Offering
“Electronic Crash Report
Training” for Kingsport and
Chattanooga. Register
online at:
www.tntrafficsafety.org**

MOTORCYCLIST WATCH YOUR SPEED

Of all vehicles, motorcycles accelerate the fastest, while trucks and buses are the slowest. Please watch your speed around trucks, especially in bad weather or at night. Colliding with the back of a truck will end your riding days. ■



DID YOU KNOW? -

NHTSA now includes on its website (<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>) a page on “Child Safety Seat Ease of Use Ratings”. To access the information, go to NHTSA’s website and look under “Popular Information” then click on “Child Seat Ratings”. ■

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*This material was developed through a project funded
by the Tennessee Department of Transportation,
Governor’s Highway Safety Office and the National
Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
Publication Number: R01.2517.078.011.05*

TENNESSEE TRAFFIC SAFETY

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