



Click It or Ticket

Law Enforcement Saving Lives and Preventing Injuries

The *Click It or Ticket/Operation ABC Mobilization* for November 2003 plays a critical role in the effort to keep people safe on our nation's roads and highways. From November 17-30, law enforcement agencies nationwide will be conducting *Click It or Ticket* campaigns that incorporate zero tolerance enforcement of safety belt laws with a special emphasis on teens and young adults. These efforts — coupled with paid advertising and the support of government agencies, local coalitions and school officials — will result in dramatic increases in safety belt use, and will defend us against one of the greatest threats to us all — traffic crashes.

You can contact your State Highway Safety Office to learn how your State is participating in the *Click It or Ticket/Operation ABC Mobilization*. Here's a quick look at *Click It or Ticket*:

What Is a *Click It or Ticket* Mobilization?

It is a highly publicized law enforcement effort that gives people more of a reason to buckle up — the increased threat of a traffic ticket. Most people buckle up for safety. But for some people, only the threat of a ticket spurs them to put on a safety belt. In *Click It or Ticket* programs, targeted advertising alerts people to the upcoming law enforcement *Mobilization*, which is supported by tens of thousands of officers from law enforcement agencies in all fifty States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Not only are tickets issued to unbelted motorists, but the surrounding publicity ensures that people know they are more likely to get a ticket.

Do *Click It or Ticket* efforts work?

Click It or Ticket campaigns and similar efforts have increased safety belt use in cities, States and even in an entire region of the country. In May 2002, for example, the 10 States that conducted the most comprehensive *Click It or Ticket* efforts saw the biggest gains, increasing safety belt use by an average of 8.6 percentage points from 68.5 percent to 77.1 percent over a four-week period. States that increased safety belt law enforcement without publicizing the effort achieved only an average gain of half a percentage point. As of September 2003, the national safety belt use rate is at 79 percent, a 4 percentage-point gain over the previous year. Approximately 17 percent of belt nonusers were converted to users during the past year alone, twice the rate seen in previous years.

Who is the audience for the *Click It or Ticket* Mobilization?

The short answer is everyone. But special attention is given to teens and young adults because this is where a small change can make a big difference. Compared to others, teens and young adults are killed at much higher rates in crashes because they are caught in a lethal intersection of inexperience, risk taking and low safety belt use. In fact, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teens and young adults in the United States. Tragically, many of these deaths could have been prevented if young people used safety belts on every trip. That's one reason this planner focuses on younger people, and the Mobilization's media buy targets people 18 to 34 years old.

Why is law enforcement participation critical?

Safety belt enforcement is not about writing tickets, but about saving lives. There have been many incidents where an officer issued a citation to someone who wasn't buckled up or didn't have his or her child properly fastened in a child safety seat — only to have that person or child survive a serious crash shortly afterwards, because getting the ticket convinced him or her to buckle up.