



Celebrate Thanksgiving Tradition of Buckling Up, Driving Sober

November 24 2015 10:41 AM



CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is joining Illinois State Police (ISP) and local law enforcement agencies to remind motorists to buckle up and drive sober during one of the heaviest travel periods of the year. With one of the biggest party nights of the year on Wednesday and more people on the roads through Sunday, police throughout the state are stepping up their enforcement of seat belt law violators and impaired drivers during the long holiday weekend.

The effort marks the beginning of an end-of-the-year push to keep traffic fatalities at record-low levels. Fatalities in Illinois are five percent higher today than at this point last year; 881 so far in 2015, compared to 833 on this day a year ago.

“Thanksgiving should be a time to appreciate family and togetherness, yet far too many preventable injuries and fatalities continue to occur,” said IDOT’s Division of Traffic Safety Director, Jared Thornley. “Please do your part as we enter into the holiday season by wearing your seat belt and making accommodations to get home safely if you do plan to be out celebrating.”

During last year's Thanksgiving holiday travel period (6 p.m. the Wednesday before Thanksgiving until 11:59 pm the following Sunday), 15 people died in traffic crashes on Illinois roads and 840 were injured. Of the 15 individuals killed, five died in crashes where at least one driver had been drinking.

The goal for this Thanksgiving is simple: Reducing those numbers by encouraging every motorist to buckle up and drive sober. Hundreds of seat belt enforcement zones and thousands of additional police hours looking for seat belt law violators will take place alongside roadside safety checks and saturation patrols looking for alcohol and drug-impaired drivers.

In addition to the ongoing "Click It or Ticket" campaign, alcohol and drug-impaired drivers are also a primary focus during the Thanksgiving holiday, with IDOT and law enforcement reminding people to "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over."

"Public safety is our number one goal during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend," said Illinois State Police Colonel Tad Williams. "ISP troopers will be patrolling Illinois roadways watching for Fatal-4 violations: DUI, Speeding, Seat Belts and Distracted Driving. Drive sober, or get pulled over. Reduce speed, buckle up and remember a text can wait."

Follow [@IDOTSafety](https://twitter.com/IDOTSafety) for IDOT safe driving updates on Twitter. For more information about Illinois traffic safety programs, visit www.idot.illinois.gov.