



IDOT, ISP to motorists: survive the Thanksgiving drive

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SPRINGFIELD – As thousands of additional motorists prepare to visit loved ones and celebrate Thanksgiving, the Illinois Department of Transportation and Illinois State Police are reminding drivers and passengers to *Click It or Ticket* to reduce the risk of traffic-related injuries.

“Thanksgiving is one of the busiest travel seasons of the year, and with that comes an increase for crashes and related injuries, especially for those who are unbuckled,” said Priscilla Tobias, Director of IDOT’s Office of Program Development. “IDOT is committed to supporting the annual *Click It or Ticket* mobilization to help ensure friends and family members arrive at their Thanksgiving celebrations safely. Help us make zero fatalities a reality by buckling up and obeying traffic laws.”

IDOT is partnering with the Illinois State Police and more than 150 law enforcement agencies to increase patrols and checkpoints throughout the state. The enforcement effort began Nov. 17 and runs through the early morning hours of Nov. 27. A high concentration of patrols will occur between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., when seat-belt use declines and a higher percentage of alcohol-related crashes and fatalities occur.

Though the seat-belt usage rate in Illinois in 2016 was 93 percent, those who travel unbuckled represent a large percentage of traffic-related fatalities. Of the 1,078 people who died in 2016 crashes, only **57** percent were wearing their seat belt. Illinois law requires that all vehicle occupants wear seat belts. Not wearing a seat belt drastically increases the occupant’s risk of being injured or killed in the event of a crash.

“Thousands of motorists will be traveling across Illinois roadways this Thanksgiving weekend. For the safety of all motorists, the Illinois State Police will focus patrol efforts on the Fatal Four violations, the most common causes of fatal traffic crashes: DUI, speeding, occupant restraint and distracted driving,” said Illinois State Police Director Leo P. Schmitz. “Watch your speed, buckle up, keep your eyes on the road, and please

move over or slow down for any vehicle on the side of the road with emergency or hazard lights activated.”

Visit BuckleUpIllinois.org for more information about *Click It or Ticket*.