LIVERMORE
CALIFORNIA

PRESS RELEASE

I. DATE AND TIME OF PRESS RELEASE: 01-10-09

II. TYPE OF INCIDENT/SITUATION/ANNOUNCEMENT: Traffic Unit enforcement efforts – Occupant Protection

III. FACTUAL INFORMATION: On 01/10/2009 the Livermore Police Department Traffic Unit conducted a special occupant protection enforcement day. Traffic officers saturated the City enforcing seatbelt violations. In seven hours, the officers wrote 88 seatbelt citations. Additionally officers wrote 13 citations to drivers using cellular telephones that were not hands free, and 18 citations for other moving and non-moving violations. Three vehicles were impounded due to their drivers being unlicensed or suspended. One driver was arrested and transported to Santa Rita Jail due to his having a warrant for his arrest.

The Livermore Police Department continues to promote traffic safety awareness to community members. By properly wearing seatbelts, our community members can prevent or reduce injuries if they are involved in a collision. According to the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), in 2006, about half, 458, of the 917 known unrestrained fatalities in California would be alive today had they simply buckled up.

The most recent seatbelt survey conducted by the Livermore Police Department in the City of Livermore found a 98% compliance rate in October 2008. This was the highest compliance rate ever recorded in the City of Livermore. According to the OTS, California's 2007 seat belt usage rate is 94.6%, which is significantly better than the national average of 81%. This is up from 93.4% in 2006 and represents 365,750 more Californians buckling up. California's seat belt use rate (94.6%) is the fourth best in the nation – behind Hawaii (97.6%), Washington (96.4%), and Oregon (95.4%).

In speaking to drivers who were cited today, Sergeant John Hurd found that drivers are aware that they should be buckling up, and most stated they simply forgot to put them on before driving. Several drivers felt since they were only traveling a short distance it was ok not to wear their seatbelts.

Funding for this extra enforcement is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

IV. CONTACT PERSON: Sergeant John Hurd
PHONE NUMBER: 925-371-4843

Should you require further information please call the contact person designated in this press release. If the contact person is not available, and you have a deadline, please call the on duty Watch Commander at (925) 371-4820.

Steve Sweeney
Chief of Police

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