



PRESS RELEASE

I. DATE AND TIME OF PRESS RELEASE: November 12, 7:30 a.m.

II. ANNOUNCEMENT:

“Too Much Turkey” Is No Excuse for Not Buckling Up

Special Click It or Ticket Enforcement Mobilization Aimed at Increasing Seat Belt Use and Saving Lives

III. With the holidays upon us and millions of Americans hitting the roads, the Livermore Police Department wants everyone to arrive safely at their destinations. Drivers and passengers need to know that officers will be out in force sending the strong message to “Click It or Ticket.”

“No one wants to start the holidays off wrong with a ticket,” said Chief Steve Sweeney of the Livermore Police Department. “Save your money for turkey and buying presents for loved ones – don’t throw it away simply because you failed to buckle up. In Livermore we have a very high percentage of motorists using their seatbelts properly, and we want to encourage everyone to use their seatbelts and thereby reduce the risk of injury or death if they are involved in a collision.”

While seat belt use is at a record high of 83 percent nationwide, 45 million Americans still fail to buckle up when they get in a motor vehicle. Even though in California 96.2 percent use their restraints, it still means that over 1.5 million Californians don’t buckle up. In Livermore, recent seatbelt surveys showed a 98% seatbelt usage rate.

During the holiday period, over 35 vehicle occupants who are not buckled up will be killed in motor vehicle crashes each day nationwide. Statewide, overall traffic deaths declined by 23 percent, from 3,995 in 2007 to 3,081 in 2009 due in part to the increased use of seat belts. Total traffic fatalities are at their lowest levels in six decades.

“Regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes,” said Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the California Office of Traffic safety. “Law enforcement estimates indicate that over 1300 Californians survived by buckling up last year. Sadly however, about 150 others will not be gathering with families during the holidays because they choose not to use their seat belts.”

National statistics also show that those least likely to buckle up are teens, young adults, males, nighttime riders, motorists traveling on rural roads, and individuals traveling in pickup trucks.

Livermore PD wants to remind our community members that it is a violation to wear a seatbelt improperly. Quite often we see drivers and passengers with the shoulder belt portion of their seatbelt under their arm and not over their shoulder, as the belts were designed to be used. Not only is this a violation of the seatbelt law, it also puts that person at risk for injury. If that vehicle is involved in a collision, the force of the collision that would

normally be transferred across the person's shoulder would now be spread across their belly area and the vital organs where there is significantly less bone and muscle mass to absorb the force. LPD wants all community members to wear their seatbelts properly.

More than 100 local law enforcement agencies statewide and the CHP will be participating in this year's Click It or Ticket mobilization which runs from Monday, November 15, 2010 through Sunday, November 28, 2010. Livermore PD will be putting officers out on saturation patrols specifically targeting seatbelt and child safety seat violations. Funding to support California's Click It or Ticket campaign was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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Steve Sweeney
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