



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE May 14, 2008**  
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**Steamboat Springs Police Services**  
**Urges all Routt County residents and visitors to Always Buckle Up**

**Special “Click It or Ticket” Enforcement Blitz**  
**Begins with Goal of Saving Lives on Colorado Roadways.**

**Steamboat Springs, Colorado** – This May, the **Steamboat Springs Police Department** is joining with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and other state and local law enforcement organizations to crack down on low seat belt use among Coloradans. This special enforcement mobilization effort, called *Click It or Ticket*, is aimed at increasing seat belt use among drivers and passengers, as well as reducing fatalities. The enforcement period continues now through June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Colorado has a secondary enforcement law for adult drivers and front-seat passengers. Drivers can be ticketed for violating the seat belt law if they are stopped for another traffic violation. *Click It or Ticket* enforcement focuses on speeding and aggressive drivers. Drivers who are stopped for a traffic violation and aren't using a seat belt will be ticketed.

According to preliminary data collected by CDOT, 206 people who weren't buckled up lost their lives in traffic crashes on Colorado highways last year. If everyone had buckled up, nearly half of the victims should have lived. **Steamboat Springs Police Services** will be working overtime to remind all drivers of the serious and deadly consequences of not wearing a seat belt.

“Research shows us that if people would just take two seconds to buckle up, it could help save their life,” **Sergeant Brown** said. “That’s why we’ll be out in force making sure that all passengers, in all vehicles, are buckled up.”

Last year, seven out of 10 people (69%) who were killed on Colorado roadways at night were not wearing a seat belt, compared to less than half (46%) during the day. “Clearly this is an indication that these individuals are not taking seat-belt use seriously, especially at night,” continued **Sergeant Brown**.

A driver or a passenger can easily be ejected from a vehicle if they're not wearing a seat belt. In fact, last year in Colorado, more than 65% of unbuckled victims were partially or totally ejected from the vehicle, while only 6% of buckled passengers were, according to statistics released by CDOT.

Regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes. In 2006, 77 % of passenger vehicle occupants in a fatal crash who were buckled up survived the crash, and that when worn correctly, seat belts have proven to reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants by 45% – and by 60% in pickup trucks, SUVs and minivans.

Colorado's child passenger safety law includes both primary and secondary enforcement. The infant seat, child safety seat and seat belt provisions of the law are primary enforcement, meaning the driver can be stopped and ticketed if an officer sees an unrestrained or improperly restrained child in the vehicle. The booster seat portion of the law is secondary enforcement. The child passenger safety law clearly defines child safety seat and seat belt use from birth through age 15. The public can find more information about the law and assistance with using child safety seats and seat belts properly by visiting [www.carseatscolorado.com](http://www.carseatscolorado.com) or by calling 1-800-LUV TOTS (1-800-588-8387). In the Denver metro area, call 303-239-4625.

Drivers under age 18 are restricted to only one passenger in the front seat and may only have as many passengers in the back seat of the car as there are seat belts. The teen driver and all passengers must be buckled up and the driver can be stopped and ticketed for violating the law. The minimum fine is \$40 and two points against the minor driver's record. (For passenger restrictions for minor drivers and more information on that law, visit [www.coteedriver.com](http://www.coteedriver.com).)

“Our message to all Colorado motorists is clear: ‘Click It or Ticket.’ No exceptions, no excuses. Wearing your seat belt costs you nothing, but not wearing it could cost you a ticket, or worse – your life,” **Sergeant Brown** said. “The next time you get into a motor vehicle please remember, the choice is yours. ‘Click It or Ticket.’ – day and night.”

For more information on “Click It or Ticket,” visit [www.nhtsa.gov/link/ciot.htm](http://www.nhtsa.gov/link/ciot.htm) and [www.dot.state.co.us](http://www.dot.state.co.us).