

May 2015 Click It or Ticket Talking Points For media interviews, other outreach efforts

- Thousands of law enforcement officers from across Virginia and the country are stepping up enforcement during the 2015 Click It or Ticket national mobilization from May 18 through May 31. And law enforcement officers want people to know: they're not cracking down to write tickets. They're doing it to save lives.
- All traffic violations will be enforced day and night during Click It or Ticket. Statistics show nighttime drivers are less likely to buckle up compared to daytime drivers. Law enforcement officers are trained to spot seat belt violations at night, so just because it's dark, they can still observe unbelted drivers. In 2014 in Virginia, 122 (48 percent) of the unrestrained fatalities occurred between 6 p.m. and 3 a.m.
- Last year in Virginia there were 256 unrestrained fatalities, which was 52 percent of all fatalities in vehicles equipped with safety restraints.
- Men aged 18 to 34 remain the biggest unbelted risk group, and more men than women die every year in motor vehicle crashes. In Virginia last year, 167 unrestrained fatalities (65 percent) were males while 86 (34 percent) were women.
- Younger adults are dying at a disproportionate rate because they are not wearing their seat belts. In the Commonwealth in 2014, 154 (60 percent) of those who died in unrestrained crashes were 21 to 50 years old.
- Those who drive and ride in pickup trucks and "work" vans may think that their large vehicle will protect them more than other vehicles in a crash. This false sense of security may cause them to not wear their seat belts, but this bravado is misplaced. According to Virginia's 2014 seat belt use rate survey, belt use rates for pickup and work van occupants fell to 57 percent.
- Seat belts are the best defense in a crash and save thousands of lives every year. In 2012 in the United States, seat belts saved an estimated 12,174 people from dying. From 2008 through 2012 seat belts saved nearly 63,000 lives across the country.
- Virginia law requires seat belt use for drivers and front seat passengers 18 years of age and older, and all passengers younger than 18, but everyone riding in a motor vehicle should be properly buckled up to prevent injury or death during a crash.
- Virginia law requires officers to summons the driver if he or she is transporting a person under the age of 18 years of age who is not properly secured by an appropriate safety seat or safety belt system. Since this law is primary, officers don't need another reason to stop a vehicle if they believe there is an individual under the age of 18 who is not properly restrained.
- Those who don't wear seat belts are not only risking their own lives, but the lives of everyone inside the vehicle since their unrestrained body becomes a missile during a crash. In addition, belts keep drivers stationary in front of the steering wheel, helping them to control the vehicle during a crash.