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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
May 8, 2015

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## **IDOT, ISP, Local Law Enforcement Begin *Click It or Ticket* Campaign**

**CHICAGO** – With Memorial Day approaching and summer right around the corner, the Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police and more than 300 local law enforcement agencies today are announcing the *Click It or Ticket* campaign over the next two weeks to crack down on seat belt law violators and impaired drivers.

“Every day in Illinois, unbuckled motorists are losing their lives in motor vehicle crashes. We and our partners in law enforcement are saying that needs to change,” said Randy Blankenhorn, Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary. “As we approach the busy Memorial Day weekend and the summer travel season, we want to make sure people are buckling up and making it to their destinations safely.”

Kicking off the busy summer travel season, the *Click It or Ticket* law enforcement mobilization begins this week and lasts through Memorial Day. During this time, police will be enforcing seat belt laws, looking for drunk or drugged drivers and other traffic violations 24/7, with a large number of patrols occurring during the late-night hours when the most unbuckled and impaired fatalities occur on Illinois roads.

The increase in traffic that comes during summer holiday weekends almost always correlates with an increase in fatalities. In past years, there have been as many as 20 or more traffic fatalities in Illinois over Memorial Day weekend. Last year’s Memorial Day weekend – the period from 6 p.m. Friday to 11:59 p.m. Monday – saw 10 crashes resulting in 12 fatalities.

Preliminary IDOT data show that between 2010 and 2014, 3,075 people riding in vehicles died in crashes. Of those, 1,492, or about 48 percent, were properly buckled in a seat belt or car seats. That means more than 50 percent of those who died in crashes during this timeframe were not buckled properly, despite observational surveys that show an all-time record rate of roughly nine out of 10 drivers and front-seat passengers wearing seat belts in Illinois.

During the *Click It or Ticket* enforcement period, motorists caught not buckling up will be ticketed. Motorists caught driving impaired will be arrested.

“Memorial Day weekend kicks off summer vacation season. Many motorists, including teens, will be traveling across Illinois highways. We want everyone to arrive safely at their final destinations,” said Illinois State Police Lt. Col. Tad Williams. “We want to take this opportunity to remind motorists to buckle up. If you are not wearing your seat belt, you will be ticketed.”

For more information about *Click It or Ticket*, visit [www.buckleupillinois.org](http://www.buckleupillinois.org).

Also taking place during May, in conjunction with the *Click It or Ticket* crackdown, is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technician month, which recognizes these important people who play a critical role in the efforts to lower fatalities and injuries on Illinois roads. Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death among children. While the best way to protect a child in a car crash is with a properly installed car seat, some people find installing one a challenge. The technician’s role is to offer support and training to parents.

Currently, Illinois has 1,700 certified CPS technicians who help keep children on our roadways safe. Each technician has undergone four days of training and must earn continuing education units every two years in order to stay certified.

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