



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor



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Safety Belt Use in Illinois Reaches 95.2 Percent

Drivers and front seat passengers are buckling up more than ever before in Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn today announced that the estimated safety belt usage rate for drivers and front seat passengers in Illinois has reached an all-time high of 95.2 percent. This marks an increase of 1.1 percent from the previous record high level of 94.1 percent last year and represents an estimated 377 lives saved on Illinois roads.

“More and more Illinois drivers are getting the message that something as simple as buckling up every time you get into a vehicle saves lives,” said Secretary Blankenhorn. “This is great news and an encouraging trend, but we still have more work to do. To get the usage rate even higher and save even more lives on Illinois roadways, we will look to strengthen our partnerships with law enforcement on safety campaigns and continue searching for creative new ways to get out the message on the importance of using your seat belt.”

An annual statewide survey of 155,175 front seat occupants on high-volume and low-volume Illinois roads provided a statistically representative sample in determining the new safety belt usage rate. This survey does not include back seat passengers. Data from the survey of back seat passengers will be available in October.

A mandatory seat belt law has been enforced in Illinois since 1985. Since 2012, all back seat passengers in Illinois also have been required to use seat belts.

Before the new 95.2 percent rate was established, a report published by the National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA) earlier this year showed that Illinois had the seventh highest safety belt usages rate of all states in 2014. According to NHTSA, safety belt use in front seats can reduce the risk of motor vehicle fatalities by 45 to 60 percent.

The dedicated efforts of law enforcement, the Click It or Ticket campaign, and heightened awareness by motorists who see seat belts as a way to save lives have all contributed to the record high safety belt usage rate.

The Click It or Ticket campaign this May involved more than 200 law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Preliminary enforcement results show the participating agencies issued 9,661 citations for seat belt and child safety seat violations.

To bring further attention to dangerous driving behavior, IDOT's innovative series, "The Driving Dead" featuring television star Michael Rooker uses digital and social media to reach drivers who are most likely to not wear a seat belt or to drive while impaired.

Fans can connect with "The Driving Dead" on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or by visiting www.thedrivingdeadseries.com.

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