



Short Safety Subject

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www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm

Be A Survivor This Independence Weekend: **BUCKLE UP**



The National Safety Council estimates that 474 people involved in serious motor vehicle crashes will survive this Independence Day weekend because they will be wearing their safety belts. "That's the good news." "The bad news is that estimates also show that 645 people will die on the highways over the holiday. If everyone were to buckle up, we would save another 173 lives."

The Council also estimates that 4,200 people will suffer disabling injuries from car crashes over the holiday weekend. Holidays are dangerous times to be on the road. The average number of traffic fatalities during the five most recent 4 1/4-day Independence Day holiday periods was 13.3 percent higher than similar non-holiday periods - a significant difference. We've made great strides in the effort to get motorists to buckle up. Safety belts are proven to save lives, yet only 70 percent of drivers and passengers wear them. The 30 percent of motorists who don't buckle up tend to be high-risk drivers who are twice as likely to be involved in fatal crashes. The United States has one of the lowest safety-belt usage rates when compared to other developed countries. For example, the safety-belt usage rate in Canada is 93 percent and in Australia it's 99 percent. Both countries have strong safety belt laws that are heavily enforced.

The National Safety Council recommends that motorists make sure that everyone is properly buckled for every single trip this holiday weekend. In addition to wearing a safety belt, the Council urges motorists to:

- Make sure children are properly fastened in belts or child safety seats in the back seat every single time they ride in a car. Although it's the law in all 50 states that children cannot ride unbuckled, six out of ten children killed in crashes are not restrained. Children ages 12 and under should always ride in the back seat, especially in vehicles with air bags.
- Don't drink and drive. More than half of all fatal vehicle crashes last Fourth of July weekend involved alcohol. If you know you will be drinking alcohol, use a designated driver or public transportation.
- Allow enough travel time for frequent breaks on longer trips. Drowsy drivers are an increasing problem in our fast-paced society. Remember, drowsiness can reduce reaction time almost as much as drinking.