

SANTA FE—The New Mexico Department of Transportation and local law enforcement agencies remind drivers to buckle up during the national annual Click it or Ticket seat belt enforcement campaign which begins May 15. Law enforcement will be out looking for unrestrained drivers and passengers during a concentrated enforcement period May 22 through June 4, which coincides with the Memorial Day holiday.

"It should be a part of every driver's routine," Transportation Secretary Ricky Serna said. "You get in the vehicle, you buckle-up. It only takes a few seconds and it's proven to help save lives."

Serna said he still couldn't believe some people still don't use seatbelts.

It's remarkable people still drive without seatbelts. It's not only the law it's your life," Serna said.

FACE THE FACTS

- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 50% of those killed in crashes in 2021 were unrestrained.
- The national seat belt use rate in 2022 was 91.6%. The Click it or Ticket campaign focuses on the 8.4% who still don't buckle up.
- Among young adults 18 to 34 killed in passenger vehicle crashes in 2021, more than half (59%) were completely unrestrained — one of the highest percentages for all age groups.
- Men make up the majority of those killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes. In 2021, 66% of the 26,325 passenger vehicle occupants who were killed were men. Men also wear their seat belts at a lower rate than women do — 54% of men killed in crashes were unrestrained,

compared to 42% of women killed in crashes.

BUST THE MYTHS

- **Vehicle type:** There seems to be a misconception among those who drive and ride in pickup trucks that their larger vehicles will protect them better than other vehicle types would in a crash. The numbers say otherwise: 61% of pickup truck occupants who were killed in 2021 were not buckled. That's compared to 47% of passenger car occupants who were not wearing seat belts when they were killed. Regardless of vehicle type, seat belt use is the single most effective way to stay alive in a crash.

- **Seating position:** Too many people wrongly believe they are safe in the back seat unrestrained. 50% of all front-seat passenger vehicle occupants killed in crashes in 2021 were unrestrained, but 57% of those killed in back seats were unrestrained.

- **Rural versus urban locations:** People who live in rural areas might believe their crash exposure is lower, but in 2021, there were over 12,500 passenger vehicle fatalities in rural locations, compared to just over 13,500 fatalities in urban locations. Out of those fatalities, 51% of those killed in the rural locations were not wearing their seat belts, compared to 49% in urban locations.

CLICK IT OR TICKET IT: DAY OR NIGHT

Written by gallupsun
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- High-visibility seat belt enforcement is important 24 hours a day, but nighttime is especially deadly for unbuckled occupants. In 2021, 57% of passenger vehicle occupants killed at night (6 pm–5:59 am) were not wearing their seat belts.

Learn more about the Click It or Ticket mobilization at [NHTSA.gov/ciot](https://www.nhtsa.gov/ciot).

