

****For PSC Insiders Circle Members only****

Friday Safety Brief®

\$3.97 USD

Seat Belts! Your Single Most Effective Safety Step

A seat belt, sometimes called a safety belt, is a safety harness designed to secure the occupant of a vehicle against harmful movement that may result from a collision or a sudden stop. Seat belts are intended to reduce injuries by stopping the wearer from hitting hard interior elements of the vehicle, and prevent the passenger from being thrown from the vehicle. Seat belts also absorb energy by being designed to stretch during any sudden deceleration, so that there is less speed differential between the passenger's body and their vehicle interior, and also to spread the loading of impact on the passenger's body.



Vehicle accidents are the number one cause of occupational deaths. Studies have shown that driver failure is the primary factor in 85% of all fatality accidents and vehicle failure accounts for the other 15%. Seat belts are the single most effective traffic safety device for preventing death and injury, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Wearing a seat belt can reduce the risk of crash injuries by 50 percent. They save lives:

- ◆ Seat belts [saved more than 75,000 lives from 2004 to 2008](#).
- ◆ Forty-two percent of passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2007 were unbelted. A [2009 NHTSA study](#) estimates more than 1,600 lives could be saved and 22,000 injuries prevented if seat belt use was 90 percent in every state.

In 2009, seat belt use averaged 88 percent nationally, compared with 69 percent in 1998. The Department of Transportation believes that nearly 40 percent of unbelted truck driver fatalities could have been prevented with a seat belt, while up to 70 percent of moderate injuries could have been reduced.

Forty-nine states and the District of Columbia have mandatory seat belt laws (the exception is New Hampshire). Seat belt use is [13 percent higher](#) in states with primary enforcement (88 percent) than in states with secondary enforcement (75 percent).

- ◆ [31 states](#) plus the District of Columbia have primary enforcement of seat belt laws, meaning police can stop vehicles and write citations for failure to buckle up.
- ◆ [18 states](#) have secondary enforcement, meaning police can issue a seat belt citation only after a vehicle is stopped for another reason

Putting on your seat belt should become a routine every time you enter your vehicle, the same as putting the key in the ignition.

Mirror, mirror,

What will you show me?

- Not much if I'm not properly adjusted
- Not much if I'm dirty
- Not much if I'm cracked
- Not much if I shake and vibrate
- **Nothing if I'm NOT used**

Mirror Reminders

- ⇒ Adjust daily - or as needed
- ⇒ Clean daily - or as needed
- ⇒ Mirror heat will "bake in" dirt particles/impurities and cause distortion
- ⇒ Every mirror provides a unique view
- ⇒ Use all available mirrors
- ⇒ **USE FREQUENTLY**
- ⇒ **LOOK = SEE = AFFIRM**

