



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

May 15, 2015

**CONTACT:**

Chris Cochran  
(916) 509-3063

## **Buckle Up, for You and Your Family!**

*Click It or Ticket Campaign Set to Kick Off May 18*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Just ahead of Memorial Day, one of the busiest travel weekends of the year, the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) is once again reminding motorists to *Click It or Ticket*. From May 18 to 31, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and local law enforcement agencies across the state are stepping up enforcement to crack down on motorists who aren't wearing their seat belts. Although California has one of the highest seat belt usage rates in the nation at 97.1 percent, there is still more to be done to reach a 100 percent compliance rate.

"The *Click It or Ticket* enforcement period isn't about issuing citations, it's about saving lives," said OTS Director, Rhonda Craft. "Buckling up should be the first priority for all vehicle occupants; ensuring that you and your passengers are properly secured before turning on the ignition is one of the simplest ways to increase your safety on the road."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2012, seat belts saved an estimated 12,174 people from dying. Additionally, if all vehicle occupants 5 and older involved in crashes had worn their seat belts, an additional 3,031 lives could have been saved in 2012 alone.

As the summer travel season kicks off, the *Click It or Ticket* campaign will be targeting drivers, passengers and children, day and night. Nighttime is especially deadly for unbuckled occupants. In 2013, about 59 percent of unbuckled passenger vehicle occupants were killed between the hours of 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. In California, unbuckled vehicle occupants over age 16 face a minimum of \$161 in fines for a first-time offense. Additionally, drivers who fail to properly buckle up a child under the age of six can expect a minimum fine of \$490 per child for a first offense, along with a violation point on the driver's record.

"Wearing a seat belt is the single most effective way to survive a vehicle collision," CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow said. "Young adults especially must do a better job of buckling their seat belts every time they get into a vehicle. Our officers see too many fatalities where the victims were not using seat belts, and every one is a tragedy because they likely could have been prevented if they had simply buckled up."

"Some people wrongly believe they will be safe if they sit in the back seat unrestrained," said Craft. "That's an unfortunate misconception. In fact, while half of all front-seat occupants killed in crashes in 2012 were unrestrained, 61 percent of those killed in back seats were unrestrained. Buckling up no matter where you sit is the wisest – and safest – decision for everyone involved."

For more traffic safety information, visit the California Office of Traffic Safety at [www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov), CHP at [www.chp.ca.gov](http://www.chp.ca.gov), or the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at [www.nhtsa.gov/ciot](http://www.nhtsa.gov/ciot).

###