

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Alabama Department of Public Safety

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### **Troopers to Step Up Enforcement, Join Safety Belt Campaign** *CIOT Blitz to Boost Seat Belt Use, Save Lives*

Alabama state troopers will increase patrols and traffic enforcement activity during the Memorial Day holiday travel period. They also are aggressively enforcing the state's seat belt and child restraint laws as part of a national Click It or Ticket seat belt enforcement mobilization May 21-June 3.

Col. J. Christopher Murphy, Department of Public Safety director, said troopers and local law enforcement agencies are conducting a number of checkpoints targeting compliance with the safety restraint regulations. "The goal of Click It or Ticket is simple – to save lives and boost compliance with the state's safety belt and child restraint laws," said Murphy. He said about one in five motorists fails to buckle up in Alabama.

Alabama's seat belt law requires that all front-seat occupants, regardless of age, be restrained. The child restraint law further requires the following size-appropriate restraint systems for children riding in front and back seats:

- ◆ Infant-only seats and convertible seats used in the rear-facing position for infants until at least 1 year of age or 20 pounds;
- ◆ Convertible seats in the forward position or forward-facing seats until the child is at least 5 years of age or 40 pounds;
- ◆ Booster seats until the child is 6 years of age;
- ◆ Seat belts until the child is 15 years of age.

The Department of Public Safety estimates that 17 people may die in traffic crashes in Alabama during the 78-hour Memorial Day travel period from 6 p.m. Friday, May 25, through midnight Monday, May 28. Last year during the 78-hour Memorial Day weekend, 13 people were killed in traffic crashes in the state. At least six of the deaths were alcohol related, and nine of the crash victims were not using safety restraints.

Murphy urged motorists to obey speed limits and all traffic laws, and to drive cautiously and carefully during the high-traffic holiday period, buckling up on every trip. He said troopers would be watchful for all traffic violations and also would be available to assist motorists. He reminded motorists that Alabama's "move-over" law requires that vehicles on roads with four or more lanes move over one lane when passing an emergency vehicle that is stopped roadside with emergency lights activated. When the vehicle cannot safely move over, the law requires the driver to slow down and pass with caution.

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