



WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Fred Newman

MEDIA RELEASE

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For More Information:

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**Washington County Virginia Deputies to Be Out in Force
This Thanksgiving Holiday for Seat Belt and DUI Enforcement**

'Click It or Ticket' Campaign to Run Throughout the Holiday Period

Law Enforcement and safety officials in Washington County are warning citizens to make sure they buckle their seat belts over the 14 days of the Thanksgiving Day holiday period or run the risk of getting a ticket.

"Whether you're going across town or across the state this Thanksgiving, make sure you and everyone riding with you are wearing their seat belts," said Sheriff Newman. "You may be enjoying the holiday, but rest assured that police will be out in force as part of this year's *Click It or Ticket* campaign, making sure your road trip is as safe as it can be."

This year's *Click it or Ticket* campaign will run throughout the 14 day holiday period, starting on November 14th and running through November 28th, said Newman. He noted that although nationally, seat belt use at 85 percent, is at an all time record, "far too many people are still not buckling up, and far too many are paying the ultimate price."

According to the latest data from the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), more than 23,000 passenger vehicle occupants died in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2009 across the nation, and almost half (11,512) were not wearing seat belts. Nationally, during the Thanksgiving holiday period in 2009, the latest year for which data are available, (which ran from 6 p.m., Wednesday, November 25, to 5:59 a.m., Monday, November 30), 303 passenger

vehicle occupants died in vehicle crashes, including 115 during daylight hours (6 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.) and 187 during night time (6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.). One person died during an unknown time period.

Nationally, night time is the worst for seat-belt use, according to NHTSA's statistics. Of the 187 passenger vehicle occupant fatalities occurring at night during the Thanksgiving holiday in 2009, 54 percent died with their seat belts unfastened (based on known restraint use); while 49 percent of the fatalities during daylight hours were not wearing seat belts.

“Fastening a seat belt takes only a second or two, and costs you nothing. Not wearing a seat belt, especially during this Thanksgiving period, will definitely cost you a ticket at the very least, and maybe even your life,” said Newman.

Seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes, according to NHTSA. Research has shown that when lap and shoulder belts are used properly, the risk of fatal injury to front seat passenger car occupants is reduced by 45 percent, and the risk of moderate to serious injury is reduced by 50 percent.

For more information about the *Click it or Ticket* campaign for highway safety during Thanksgiving, please visit www.TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov or contact your Local Law Enforcement Agency.