



WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Fred Newman

MEDIA RELEASE

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***Click It or Ticket*
2010 Thanksgiving Planner**

Too Much Turkey Is No Excuse for Not Buckling Up

With the holidays upon us and millions of Americans hitting the roads, the Washington County Sheriff's Office wants everyone to arrive safely at their destinations. So, drivers and passengers, be on the lookout! The Washington County Sheriff's Office will be out in force sending the strong message to *Click It or Ticket*.

"No one wants to start the holidays off wrong with a ticket," said Sheriff Fred Newman. "Save your money for turkey and buying presents for loved ones – don't throw it away simply because you failed to buckle up," said Newman.

While seat belt use is at a record high of 83 percent nationwide, 45 million Americans still fail to buckle up when they get in a motor vehicle. According to statistics from the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), on any given day about 38 passenger vehicle occupants who are not buckled up are killed in motor vehicle crashes.

In 2008 alone, nearly 13,000 unbuckled passenger vehicle occupants lost their lives on U.S. roadways. It is estimated that nearly one third of these lives could have been saved if they had been properly belted. NHTSA statistics also show that those least likely to buckle up are teens; young adults; males; nighttime riders; motorists traveling on rural roads; and individuals traveling in pickup trucks.

“Sadly, the holidays, which for many are the happiest time of the year, is also one of the deadliest and most tragic,” said Sheriff Fred Newman.

The 2008 Thanksgiving holiday was no different, running from Monday, November 17, to Monday, December 1, 2008, 1,120 passenger occupants were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Tragically, more than half of those killed were not wearing their seat belts at the time of the crash, where restraint use was known.

“Wearing a seat belt costs you nothing, but not wearing it could cost you a ticket or worse...your life,” said Newman. “We want all drivers and passengers to *Click It or Ticket*, day and night.”

Regular 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* seat belt enforcement campaign for highway safety during Thanksgiving, please visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov, or contact the Washington County Virginia Sheriff’s Office at 276-676-6000 for more information on keeping our highways a safe place to travel.