



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **OHIO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

Ohio Department of Public Safety • Henry Guzmán, Director  
[www.publicsafety.ohio.gov](http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**November 25, 2008**

**Contacts: Lt. Tony Bradshaw, OSHP (614) 752-2792 or  
Lindsay Komlanc, ODPS Media Relations Director (614) 752-4325**

### **ODPS Urges Motorists To Buckle Up Every Trip, Every Time**

COLUMBUS – Regardless how much traffic is on the road this Thanksgiving holiday, the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) is urging motorists to buckle up day and night.

To help motorists and passengers remember to be safety-conscious, the Ohio State Highway Patrol and more than 70 local law enforcement agencies across the state will be out between now and Dec. 1 looking for aggressive, impaired or otherwise un-safe drivers. If pulled over for another violation, those not wearing seat belts will be ticketed. The local efforts are funded and coordinated by ODPS' Ohio Traffic Safety Office, which promotes educational programs, coalition-building efforts and campaigns focused on highway safety.

"We are asking all motorists to make safety their first priority while traveling during this holiday period," said ODPS Director Henry Guzmán. "Law enforcement and safety partners around the state are reminding everyone to drive carefully, plan ahead to have a designated driver should you choose to drink, and always buckle up, each and every trip, day or night."

Night time can be one of the more dangerous times on the road because seat belt use is lower. In 2007, 17 people died on Ohio's roads during the Thanksgiving holiday period. Of the 15 fatalities known to have a seat belt available, four people were buckled up. During the daytime period, 33 percent were buckled up but during the night time period only 16 percent of those who died were buckled up. Nationally, during the Thanksgiving holiday in 2006, 457 people died in motor vehicle crashes, including 188 during daylight hours and 266 during night time (three deaths were unknown regarding time). Of the night time crashes, 138 people died with their seatbelts unfastened.

Research from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has shown that when lap and shoulder belts are used properly, the risk of fatal injury to front seat passengers is reduced by 45 percent, and the risk of moderate to serious injury is reduced by 50 percent.

"To lose a loved one is a terrible thing to experience, especially during one of America's family holidays, but to lose one's life when it might have been saved by taking two seconds to buckle a seat belt is truly senseless," said Colonel Richard H. Collins, Patrol Superintendent. "When you're in your vehicle, whether for long trips or short, please remember to buckle up every trip, every time."

Motorists can contact the OSHP by calling 1-877-7-PATROL if they see a disabled vehicle or unsafe driver. The Patrol recommends that in the event of a vehicle breakdown, turn on hazard warning lights, safely position the vehicle as far off the road as possible and open the hood. Place a "help" sign in the rear window, and stay inside the vehicle until help arrives.

###