



SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS

SHERIFF'S OFFICE
GARY STEED
Sheriff

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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: MAY 17, 2007
AGENCY: SEDGWICK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
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GET READY FOR *CLICK IT OR TICKET*

DRIVERS IN SEDGWICK COUNTY ARE WARNED TO BE ALERT TO HEIGHTENED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT IN MAY AS ADDITIONAL DEPUTIES FROM THE SEDGWICK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE WILL BE PLACED ON THE ROADWAYS TO AGGRESSIVELY ENFORCE ALL KANSAS TRAFFIC LAWS. SUPPORTED BY A GRANT FROM THE KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, THE DEPUTIES WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN THE KANSAS ***CLICK IT OR TICKET*** ENFORCEMENT CAMPAIGN, MAY 22 THROUGH JUNE 4. AS SUCH, THERE WILL BE STRICT ENFORCEMENT OF THE SAFETY BELT USE AND CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY ACTS DURING THAT TIME.

THE SAFETY BELT USE ACT SPECIFIES THAT ALL FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS MUST BE BUCKLED IN. THE CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY ACT AUTHORIZES OFFICERS TO PULL OVER ANY VEHICLE SUSPECTED OF HOLDING CHILD PASSENGERS UNDER THE AGE OF 14 WHO ARE NOT PROPERLY RESTRAINED. IT STIPULATES THAT CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF FOUR MUST BE SECURED IN A FEDERALLY-APPROVED CHILD SAFETY SEAT, AND CHILDREN, AGED FOUR THROUGH 13, MUST BE SECURELY BELTED IN. IN ADDITION, THIS LAW PROHIBITS PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 14 FROM RIDING IN ANY PART OF A VEHICLE NOT INTENDED FOR CARRYING PASSENGERS, SUCH AS A PICKUP BED.

THE SEDGWICK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE IS AMONG 130 LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, STATEWIDE, INCLUDING THE KANSAS HIGHWAY PATROL THAT WILL PARTICIPATE IN ***CLICK IT OR TICKET***. THEIR AIM IS TO DRASTICALLY REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PREVENTABLE DEATHS AND INJURIES THAT OCCUR WHEN UNBELTED DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS ARE INVOLVED IN TRAFFIC CRASHES. LAST YEAR, TRAFFIC CRASHES CLAIMED THE LIVES OF FOUR-HUNDRED, TWENTY-EIGHT (428) PEOPLE. TRAGICALLY, OF THOSE WHO DIED, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT OVER 70 PERCENT WERE NOT WEARING SEAT BELTS.

ACROSS THE STATE, ONLY 69% OF FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS BELT IN, RANKING KANSAS 42ND IN THE NATION FOR SEAT BELT COMPLIANCE. COMPLIANCE RATES, BY COUNTY, RANGE FROM 82% TO 49%, WITH THE HIGHEST RATES GENERALLY FOUND IN THE MORE POPULOUS COUNTIES, AND THE LOWEST RATES IN THE LEAST POPULOUS COUNTIES. THIS URBAN-RURAL BELT RATE SPLIT IS MOST PERILOUS FOR THOSE LIVING IN THE RURAL COUNTIES SINCE MOST FATALITIES OCCUR IN THOSE AREAS. MORE CRASHES OCCUR IN URBAN AREAS, BUT THEY ARE LESS LIKELY TO BE FATAL.

MORE DISHEARTENING TO THE LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY, HOWEVER, IS THE LOW COMPLIANCE RATE FOR CHILD PASSENGER RESTRAINT. ACROSS THE STATE, ONLY 59% OF CHILDREN, AGES 0-13, ARE RESTRAINED; COUNTY RATES VARY FROM 41% TO 73%, WITH RURAL COUNTIES, AGAIN, GENERALLY LAGGING WELL BEHIND THEIR METROPOLITAN COUNTERPARTS.

THE SEDGWICK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE IS MAKING A CLEAR STATEMENT THAT IT IS COMMITTED TO AGGRESSIVELY TICKETING VIOLATORS OF KANSAS PASSENGER RESTRAINT LAWS, AND ALL TRAFFIC INFRACTIONS THAT MAKE OUR ROADWAYS UNSAFE.

DON'T BE A STATISTIC....BUCKLE UP.

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