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***Click It or Ticket* to Boost Seat Belt Use – Day and Night**

[Santa Maria, CA) As motorists take to the roads this Memorial Day holiday, Santa Maria police are urging everyone to buckle up and participate in the *Click It or Ticket* seat belt law campaign and looking for motorists who are not belted.

“Officers will be out there, strictly enforcing seatbelt laws. They will also be ensuring our children are safe and secure in appropriate child safety seats. Our officers see many children who are saved or uninjured in these child safety seats, but sadly they also see many who are not - *Click It or Ticket*.” said Santa Maria Police Department Chief Ralph Martin. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), **52** percent of the **21,253** passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2011 were not wearing their seat belts at the time of the crash. Deaths involving seat belt non-use are more prevalent at night than during the daytime. According to NHTSA, **62** percent of the **10,135** passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2011 during the overnight hours were not wearing their seat belts at the time of the crash.

“Seat belts save thousands of lives every year, but far too many motorists are still not buckling up, especially at night when the risk of getting in a crash is even greater,” said Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety. “We want everyone to have a safe summer, but it requires an important step on the part of motorists – clicking that seat belt.”

In 2011, seat belts saved an estimated **11,949** lives nationwide according to NHTSA. While this year’s *Click It or Ticket* campaign runs from May 20 through June 2, officers are out enforcing seat belt laws year-round.

For more on the national *Click It or Ticket* mobilization, please visit www.nhtsa.gov.

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