## 2018 Thanksgiving Buckle Up America

## FACT SHEET

### Thankful for Seat Belt Safety

Whether you’re traveling across town or across the country, it’s essential to always wear your seat belt.

* Thanksgiving weekend, millions of Americans will hit the roads, eager to spend time with family and friends. It’s one of the busiest travel times of the year, and unfortunately, that means more crashes.
* The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is reminding everyone that seat belts save lives through the campaign *Buckle Up—Every Trip. Every Time*. Buckling up gives the best defense against injury or death in a crash.
* In 2016, there were 23,714 passenger vehicle occupants (in passenger cars, pickup trucks, vans, or SUVs) killed in traffic crashes in the United States. Almost half (48%) of those who were killed were not wearing their seat belts.
* NHTSA estimates that seat belts saved the lives of 14,668 passenger vehicle occupants age 5 and older in 2016. If everyone had worn their seat belts on every trip that year, an additional 2,456 lives could have been saved.
* The facts don’t lie: when you wear your seat belt as a front-seat occupant of a passenger car, your risk of fatal injury goes down by 45 percent. For light-truck occupants, that risk is reduced by 60 percent.
* Young people continue to be overrepresented in fatal crashes and seat belt nonuse. Among the passenger vehicle occupants killed in crashes in 2016, occupants 13-15 and 25-34 years old were unrestrained at a rate of 62 and 59 percent, respectively.
* Males are more likely than females to be unrestrained in fatal crashes. Fifty-two percent of the male passenger vehicle occupants killed in crashes in 2016 were unrestrained, compared with 40 percent of females.
* If you’re ejected from a vehicle in a crash, odds are that you will not survive. In 2016, 8 out of 10 (81%) of the people totally ejected from vehicles in crashes were killed. Wearing your seat belt is the most effective way to prevent ejection; only 1 percent of occupants wearing seat belts were ejected in fatal crashes, compared to 29 percent of those who were unrestrained.

Make this Thanksgiving different from years past.

* During the Thanksgiving holiday weekend in 2016 (6 p.m. on Wednesday, November 23th, to 5:59 a.m. on Monday, November 28th), there were 341 passenger vehicle occupants killed in traffic crashes across the nation.
* Tragically, 49 percent of those killed were not buckled up, representing an increase in seat belt use compared to the same weekend in 2015, when 52 percent of those killed in traffic crashes were unrestrained.
* Nighttime is deadlier than daytime in terms of seat belt use. Over the 2016 Thanksgiving weekend, 55 percent of passenger vehicle occupants killed in crashes at night were unbuckled, compared to 39 percent during the day.
* Surviving your Thanksgiving drive this year—and making it to next Thanksgiving—can be as simple as buckling up. In the last decade, seat belts have saved the lives of more than 100,000 people in the United States. Those people are thankful they wore their seat belts. Won’t you wear yours? *Buckle Up—Every Trip. Every Time*.

Drive safely this Thanksgiving. For more information, please visit www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/seat-belts.

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