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## Click It or Ticket is saving lives Enforcement blitz buckling down on those not buckled up

By U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

Nearly one in five Americans, approximately 18 percent nationally, still fail to regularly wear their seat belts when driving or riding in motor vehicles, according to a recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) seat belt study. Additionally, NHTSA research shows that there is a problem with drivers and passengers not buckling up at night when the risk of a fatal crash is even greater. This is clearly an indication that some individuals are not taking the seatbelt law seriously.

The Army lost 74 Soldiers in FY 2008 to both day and night fatal POV accidents. Of those drivers and passengers, 15 percent were reported as not wearing their seat belts.

Regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes. NHTSA statistics show that in 2006, 72 percent of passengers who buckled up while involved in a fatal crash survived. When worn correctly, seat belts have proven to reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passengers by 45 percent in cars and by 60 percent in pickup trucks, SUVs and minivans.

Too many Soldiers take the attitude that a serious POV accident will never happen to them. Fatal POV crashes can and do happen every day. No one is immune or invincible. That's why the U.S. Army is joining with state and local law enforcement agencies and highway safety officials from May 18, 2009 to May 31, 2009 to participate in the aggressive national Click It or Ticket seat belt enforcement mobilization. On and off the installation law enforcement officers will be out enforcing seat belt laws by conducting seat belt checkpoints and zero tolerance seat belt enforcement. The military police and other law enforcement organizations are not out there to just write tickets, but to save lives and to get everyone to buckle up – with a new emphasis this year on convincing more motorists to buckle up both day and night.

The bottom line is failure to wear a safety belt can be deadly.

For more information on the national Click It or Ticket mobilization, please visit [www.buckleupamerica.org](http://www.buckleupamerica.org).

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