

CALLAHAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE ALERTS DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS TO BUCKLE UP OR FACE FINES, TICKETS

"Click It or Ticket" increased enforcement period runs May 24–June 6

May 24, 2021

BAIRD, TX – In anticipation of increased summer holiday travel, Callahan County Sheriff's Office is joining forces with the Texas Department of Public Safety and local law enforcement agencies throughout Texas to increase seat belt use.

Stepped-up enforcement of the state's seat belt laws between May 24 and June 6 is a key component of the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) annual *Click It or Ticket* seat belt safety campaign. Officials at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration report that wearing a seat belt reduces the risk of dying in a crash by 45% for people in the front seat of passenger cars. For those in pickups, seat belts reduce the risk of dying in a crash by 60%, since pickups are more likely to roll over than passenger vehicles.

Sheriff Eric Pechacek wants to communicate the following message: "While many drivers and passengers have made a habit of buckling up, we still see an alarming number of nighttime motorists and pickup truck drivers and passengers who are lagging behind them in seat belt use. This is unfortunate, because the few seconds it takes to fasten your seat belt can mean the difference between life and death in a crash. We never enjoy giving tickets, but if doing so gets someone to buckle up and that saves their life, then it's worth it."

According to recent TxDOT crash data, 1,073 people who died last year in crashes on Texas roads weren't wearing their seat belt. Nighttime is a particularly deadly time. In 2020, there were more than 2,200 fatalities and more than 7,100 serious injuries as a result of crashes between 6 p.m. and 5:59 a.m.

State law requires everyone in a vehicle to buckle up or face fines and court costs of up to \$200. Children younger than 8 years must be in a child safety seat or booster seat unless they're taller than 4 feet 9 inches. If they aren't properly restrained, the driver faces fines up to \$250 plus court costs.

To learn more about *Click It or Ticket*, visit texasclickitorticket.com.