



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
TRANSPORTATION CABINET  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Kentuckians Encouraged to Work Together to Save Lives on Roadways**  
*Operation Crash Reduction runs Oct. 11-14*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 10, 2024)** – As part of a regional initiative aimed at encouraging seat belt use to save lives and preventing serious injuries due to traffic crashes, law enforcement throughout Kentucky will conduct a high-visibility enforcement campaign, called Operation Crash Reduction, from Oct. 11 through Oct. 14.

“Sharing the road with other drivers means a lot is beyond our control, but one thing we can each decide is to make the safe choice to buckle up every time,” said Gov. Andy Beshear. “Seat belt use and responsible driving practices for both drivers and passengers can be the difference between life and death.”

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s (KYTC) Office of Highway Safety (KOHS), state and local law enforcement and the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#) are teaming up to support Operation Crash Reduction. The operation is focused on NHTSA Region 3, consisting of Delaware, the District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia — a region that sees some of the nation’s highest numbers of traffic deaths.

Since 2011, October has been the highest month for fatal crashes in the United States. In Region 3 states, approximately half of vehicle occupants killed in these crashes were unrestrained. Additionally, since 2011, more roadway deaths occurred on Columbus Day weekend than during the holiday periods of Thanksgiving or Memorial Day.

“For several years now, we have had this troubling trend,” said NHTSA Regional Administrator Stephanie Hancock. “We know that speed, distraction and impairment are the root causes of most of the crashes in these states. However, seat belt and child safety seat use are your primary sources of protection in crashes caused by speeding, impaired or distracted drivers.”

In Kentucky, there have been 1,297 fatal crashes during the month of October since 2011. In eight of those years, October had the highest or second highest number of fatal crashes. Last year there were 417 injuries and 7 deaths on Kentucky roadways during the Oct. 7-9 holiday weekend.

"A simple click is all it takes to save a life," said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. "In the event of a crash, securely fastened child seats and seat belts offer the best protection against serious injuries or fatalities. That's why we're working together with NHTSA and our state and local law enforcement partners to remind drivers to buckle up and keep their phones away."

According to NHTSA, when worn correctly, seat belts reduce the risk of fatalities by 45% for front-seat vehicle occupants and by 60% for pickup truck, SUV and minivan occupants.



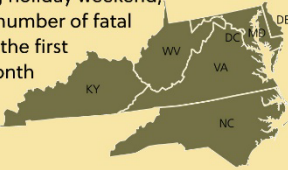

"Seat belts save lives," said Hancock. "Everyone — front seat and back, child and adult — should remember to buckle up."

For more information on seat belts, visit [nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/seat-belts](https://nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/seat-belts)

EDITORS NOTE: Click [here](#) for Operation Crash Reduction image.

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<p><b>Operation Crash Reduction</b> Seat Belts Save Lives</p> <p>It doesn't matter what type of vehicle you drive, buckling up is the single most effective way to stay alive during a motor vehicle crash.</p> <p>Please: Buckle up, drive sober, and never drive distracted.</p>  <p> #BuckleUpAmerica</p>	<p><b>Operation Crash Reduction</b> Seat Belts Save Lives</p> <p>From 2015-2019, October 1-15, which includes the long holiday weekend, had the highest number of fatal crashes (885) for the first 15 days of any month during this time period for the following states:</p>  <p>Delaware, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia, &amp; West Virginia.</p> <p> #BuckleUpAmerica</p>
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