



February 4, 2013

Safety Belt Enforcement Campaign

Officers from the Coos Bay Police Department will join law enforcement agencies throughout Oregon in a Safety Belt Enforcement Campaign from February 11th to February 24th. This is the first of three scheduled safety belt and traffic safety campaigns for 2013. The focus of the program is to increase public awareness of the seatbelt laws with the goal of reducing traffic injuries and deaths. Members from the Coos Bay Police Department will take to the road during this campaign to focus their attention on seatbelt violations and child safety seat violations, but they will also be watching for drivers who are speeding, texting, and driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs.

Oregon law requires that there be "proper use" of the entire seatbelt system. The lap belt placed low across the hips and a shoulder belt over the collarbone and crossing the center of the chest. Belts should be free of slack and lying flat with no twists or knots. If necessary, slide the attachment on the door post up or down to fit the size of you or your passenger. Shoulder belts should not be placed under the arm or behind the back as this can cause serious internal injuries or ejection in the event of a crash.

- A statewide observation survey in June 2012 found 97% of Oregon's motoring public using safety belts. This makes Oregon one of the highest belt use states in our country.
- Unfortunately, among four to eight year olds booster seat use was observed to be only 60%; and half of children in this age group, killed or injured in crashes last year were not using boosters.
- Child safety seats reduce the likelihood of infants under one year old being killed in a crash by 71%, and the fatal risk for toddlers aged one to four by 54%.
- The US Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates 9,310 lives were saved by the proper use of child safety seats between 1975 and 2009.
- Oregon law requires children less than 40 pounds be restrained in a child seat. Children under one year or weighing less than 20 pounds must be restrained in a rear-facing child seat. A child over 40 pounds must be restrained in either a child seat or a booster seat appropriate for their size until they reach age eight or 4' 9" tall AND the adult belt system fits them correctly.
- For help with child seats or additional "best practice" information, refer to the seat manufacturer's instructions, vehicle owner's manual, or call ACTS Oregon Child Safety Seat Resource Center at 503-643-5620 in Portland or 877-793-2608.

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