Utah’s Law to Save Lives, Fact Sheet

**Key Seat Belt Information:**

1. Seat belts are the single most effective traffic safety device for preventing death and injury
2. Seat belts help the driver stay in the driver seat to maintain control of the vehicle
3. Seat belts reduce the risk of injury or death by 50% when used properly.

**The Law:** Starting May 12, 2015, wearing a seat belt while driving is a primary law. In other words, law enforcement can stop and educate individuals for driving unbuckled on Utah roads. Prior to H.B. 79, failure to wear a seat belt was a secondary offense.

**The Fine:** The maximum seat belt fine is $45. The fine is waived upon completion of an online 30-minute seat belt safety course available through the Utah Safety Council at utahsafetycouncil.org. Inquirers may also call the Council at 801.746.SAFE (7233) or toll-free 800.933.5943

**Enforcement’s Goal:** Educate and persuade Utahns of the importance of seat belt use to saves lives.

**2015 Unbuckled Fatalities:** 22 fatalities confirmed so far in 2015 were not wearing a seat belt.

**2014 Unbuckled Fatality Numbers:**

* In **2014** unbuckled fatalities, 72 people, constituted nearly half of our roadway fatalities, \*\*165 total motor vehicle fatalities.
* Observational surveys completed by the Highway Safety Office report 83 percent seat belt usage in Utah. This means 17 percent of our population continue to drive unbuckled and contribute to nearly half of our \*\*roadway fatalities.

\*\*Excluding pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists.

**The 17 percent: Hard Core Non Seat Belt Users**

Based on research done by the Utah Highway Safety Office, the following groups are reported to be over represented in unbuckled fatalities.

* Males ages 18-34
* Males 55 +
* Hispanic males 15-24

**Proper fit for a seat belt:**

* Place the shoulder belt across your shoulder bone, down the middle of your chest and away from your neck. Adjust the lap belt across your hips below your stomach. NEVER put the shoulder belt behind your back or under your arm. Remember, your hip and shoulder bones are more equipped to withstand crash forces than other parts of your body. Wearing BOTH your lap and shoulder belt is the best line of defense.
* A properly fitted and installed car seat can save a child’s life in the event of a crash. Learn more at clickitutah.org

