



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Thanksgiving *Buckle Up* Campaign Reminds Drivers:
Buckle Up November 27 – December 1 and Every Day**

Barre, VT – The Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) joins law enforcement agencies across the state and nation in urging everyone to buckle up for Thanksgiving. To ensure everyone's safety, law enforcement agencies throughout Vermont will be participating in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's seat belt enforcement campaign. The *Buckle Up* Vermont campaign coincides with the Thanksgiving holiday each year and will be from November 27 to December 1 this year.

Law enforcement officers from Vermont, with support from the State Highway Safety Office, will hold a press conference and blood drive to raise awareness about seat belt safety. On Tuesday, November 26, at 10:30 a.m., at the St. Mary's Parish Hall in St. Albans, municipal, county, and state law enforcement officers, as well as representatives from AAA Northern New England, AOT, the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles, and emergency medical services, will gather to donate blood and remind drivers of the importance of wearing seat belts.

Due to high traffic volumes, this can be a very dangerous time on the roads. During the Thanksgiving weekend in 2022, 326 passenger vehicle occupants were killed in traffic crashes in the United States, and 43% (141) were unrestrained. Seat belts save lives! Although the Vermont seat belt use rate in 2024 is 88.4%, around the national average, we need to do better. In Vermont from 2014 to 2023, 253 vehicle occupants or 40.16% of all Vermont crash fatalities were unbelted.

During this *Buckle Up* enforcement campaign, participating law enforcement agencies will be educating operators on the importance of always wearing their seat belts. This critical work is done to help save lives and keep Vermonters safe.

"The Thanksgiving holiday is the start of a special time of year for so many people," said Transportation Secretary Joe Flynn. "No matter how long or short your drive, it's critical to wear your seat belt. We want everyone to have a safe and happy Thanksgiving. Please, make sure everyone in your vehicle is buckled before you turn on the car, and that includes children being in the correct car seats, too. Buckle Up: You're worth every click."

For more information about traveling safely this Thanksgiving, please visit www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/seat-belts and <https://drivewell.vermont.gov/>.

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