



Feb. 2, 2004
04-017

For More Information: Carla Levinski (503) 986-4199
Jay Remy (503) 986-4180

Enforcement to target child seat safety February 9 - 22

Law enforcement officers will conduct the “Three Flags Campaign” enforcement blitz Feb. 9-22 focused on increasing safety belt use throughout Oregon. Because it coincides with National Child Passenger Safety Week, Feb. 8-14, the blitz will focus on public education regarding proper use of the correct type of child restraint. Booster seats are required for children who have outgrown child safety seats but remain too small to fit securely in adult lap/shoulder belts.

Oregon law requires child safety seats until children reach four years of age or 40 pounds, then booster seats until the child attains six years of age and 60 pounds. Further, it is strongly recommended that children aged twelve and under ride in the back seat.

Safety belts and child safety seats can more than double the chances of surviving a crash uninjured. Since Oregon voters approved the 1990 safety belt law, belt use has doubled and crash injury and fatal rates have decreased by 43 percent and 53 percent respectively. However, more than half of crash fatalities last year were reportedly not wearing safety belts. ODOT estimates that more than 200 lives could be saved per year if everyone buckles up.

For maximum protection and compliance with Oregon law, larger children and adults must wear both the lap and shoulder portions of a safety belt system. “The odds are great that you will be in a crash at some point in your life,” said Carla Levinski, occupant protection coordinator for the Oregon Department of Transportation’s Transportation Safety Division. “Safety belts, properly worn, keep you inside your car where you have a much better chance of surviving a crash or rollover.”

For several years, Oregon’s overall belt use rate has been among the top four states. While the national average use rate is 79 percent, Oregon’s official use rate is 91 percent.

###ODOT###