

May 5, 2011

Sally Ellertson
Public Information Officer
141 West Renfro
Burleson, Texas 76028-4261
817-426-9622
F: 817-426-9390
sellertson@burlesontx.com
www.burlesontx.com

The Texas Department of Transportation's 10th annual Click It or Ticket spring campaign kicked off this week, with the focus on the upcoming Memorial Day holiday weekend (May 23-June 5). The Burleson Police Department will be participating in the campaign by stepping up enforcement efforts during the two-week period.

Since Oct. 1, 2010, the Burleson Police Department has worked one fatality crash involving a pickup driver who was not wearing a seatbelt. A 47-year-old Burleson man died March 19 in a two-vehicle crash on Hwy. 174. He had pulled on to Hwy. 174 from a private driveway, but he failed to yield right-of-way to a pickup that was traveling northeast on Wilshire Boulevard. The 47-year-old man was not wearing a seatbelt. The driver of the other vehicle was wearing a seatbelt.

State law requires everyone in a vehicle to be secured by a seatbelt. Unbuckled adult passengers in the back seat will be ticketed. Children younger than 8 years old must be in a child safety seat or booster seat until they are taller than 4 feet 9 inches. Officers will ticket drivers whose small and young passengers are not properly restrained as required by law.

Why should you buckle up? According to Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), riders in the back seat who use lap and shoulder belts are more likely to survive in a crash than unrestrained occupants. Unbelted backseat passengers can become projectiles in a car crash. One of every two pickup drivers killed in traffic crashes were not buckled up.

Researchers estimate that safety belts have saved 2,843 lives in Texas in the past decade. Before 2002, only 76.1 percent of those in a vehicle driving in or through Texas were buckling up. That number is now at 93.84 percent. Experts at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration NHTSA estimate that this improvement has resulted in 2,843 fewer fatalities, 48,000 fewer serious injuries and a savings to the state of more than \$10 billion in associated costs.

If you are ticketed in Burleson and go before the Municipal Court, a ticket for a driver or a passenger who is not wearing a seatbelt will cost approximately \$148. If a child is not in a safety seat a citation is issued to the driver. That ticket costs approximately \$248.

Booster seats help protect children who have outgrown their child safety seats but are still too small for adult-sized seat belts that fit properly. Boosters help position a seat belt across the strongest part of the body by boosting the child up. Children should ride in the back seat.