

NEWS RELEASE



Southern Platte Fire Protection District
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Fire District Urges Usage of Seatbelts: *Still, 1 in 7 adults do not wear a seat belt on every trip*

Parkville, MO (February 18, 2011) – According to a study, released by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, almost 6 out of 7 U.S. drivers surveyed report that they always wear a seat belt when driving or riding in a motor vehicle. Seat belt usage has become the national norm in most states, although 3.9% of Missouri residents report that they never wear a seatbelt, while 69% always wear their seatbelt.

Fire Marshal Dean Cull states that still, every 14 seconds an adult in the United States is treated in an emergency department for crash-related injuries. "If occupants would just buckle their seatbelts and wear them correctly, this would possibly cut in half the chance of being seriously injured or killed in a crash," said Cull.

The study found that states with primary seat belt enforcement laws, where police officers can pull cars over and issue tickets solely because drivers and passengers are unbelted, have higher rates of seat belt use than states with secondary enforcement laws, which only allow officers to issue tickets to drivers who have been pulled over for violating another law. Missouri is a state with the secondary enforcement law. The national average for seat belt use is 85 percent.

Fire Marshal Cull encourages everyone to take the following steps to protect yourself and others on the road:

- Use a seat belt on every trip, no matter how short.
- Encourage everyone in the car to buckle up, including those in the back seat.
- Make sure children are properly buckled up in a seat belt, booster seat, or car seat, whichever is age- and size-appropriate.
- Have all children ages 12 and under sit in the back seat.

If you wish to research further information on seatbelt safety, please visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/seatbelts/index.html>

The Southern Platte Fire Protection District's four stations provide fire suppression, inspections, emergency medical assistance, hazardous-materials response, and public education for more than 37,000 citizens in Platte County, MO. The Southern Platte Fire Protection District, which includes Parkville, Weatherby Lake, and Farley, is one of the fastest-growing areas in the Kansas City metropolitan area. In addition to serving its own District, the department provides automatic-aid assistance to the Kansas City Fire Department and Riverside Public Safety.

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