



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Reminds Thanksgiving Travelers to Buckle Up
and Put the Phone Down**

Effort aims to prevent crashes, injuries and fatalities throughout the holiday season

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 14, 2022) – With the holidays quickly approaching, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s (KYTC) Office of Highway Safety (KOHS) is providing Thanksgiving travelers important lifesaving reminders – buckle up and put the phone down.

“The upcoming holiday is one of the busiest travel times of the year, so we’re asking Kentuckians to protect themselves and other road users by buckling up and putting the phone down every time they enter a vehicle,” said Gov. Andy Beshear. “These basic safety practices will make a considerable difference in preventing crashes and lessening the severity of injuries and the number of deaths on our roadways.”

Over the past decade, distracted driving has become one of the leading causes of vehicle crashes on our nation’s roads. According to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#), while anything that takes a driver’s eyes off the road, hands off the wheel or mind off the task of driving is a hazard, texting and the use of phone while driving is especially risky because it combines all three types of distraction – visual, manual and cognitive.

Data from the KOHS shows that each year in Kentucky, distracted driving results in more than 50,000 crashes, more than 15,000 injuries and approximately 200 deaths.

“Preventable deaths and injuries are the hardest ones to accept,” said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. “These are not just numbers. These are people – mothers, fathers, sons, daughters – that either didn’t survive or their lives were seriously altered due to someone not making a safe choice when behind the wheel.”

According to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#), when worn correctly, seat belts reduce the risk of death by 45 percent for front-seat vehicle occupants and by 60 percent for pickup truck, SUV and minivan occupants. Properly fastened seat belts

contact the strongest parts of the body, such as the chest, hips and shoulders. A seat belt spreads the force of a crash over a wide area of the body, putting less stress on any one part, and allows the body to slow down with the crash, extending the time when crash forces are felt by the occupant.

“Sometimes even the most attentive drivers are involved in a crash caused by other drivers,” said Sec. Gray. “A seat belt provides protection against a speeding, distracted or drunken driver, so please buckle up to help you and your loved ones make it home safely.”

According to KOHS, each year in Kentucky, more than half of those killed in motor vehicles are not wearing a seat belt.

For more information, please visit <http://kyhighwaysafety.com/>.

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