



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
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Thanksgiving Travelers Reminded To Buckle Up and Put the Phone Down
Effort aims to prevent crashes, injuries and fatalities throughout the holiday season

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 15, 2023) – With the holidays quickly approaching, travelers are reminded of two important lifesaving actions – buckling up and putting the phone down every time they enter a vehicle.

“The holiday season is one of the busiest travel times of the year, so we’re asking Kentuckians to buckle up and put the phone down in an effort to protect themselves and other families traveling on the road,” said Gov. Andy Beshear. “These basic steps can save lives and keep our most precious cargo – our Kentucky families – safe on the road.”

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 \(NHTSA\)](#), 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 a phone while driving is especially risky because it combines all three types of distraction – visual, manual and cognitive.

Data from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s (KYTC) Office of Highway Safety shows that each year, 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 [NHTSA](#), when worn correctly, seat belts reduce the risk of death by 45% for front-seat vehicle occupants and 60% 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 Secretary 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 <https://bupdky.com/>.

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