

TEXAS TEEN BELTS
ENFORCEMENT PLANNER
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Teen Fatalities Increase in 2009
*Bedford Police Department to Buckle Down
on Those Not Buckling Up*

[Bedford, TX] – As 2010 gets into full swing, Texans hitting the road this February should always wear their seat belts or be ready to face the consequences. That’s the message the **Bedford Police Department** will be sending, as they buckle down on *all* motorists not buckling up—especially teens.

“We hope that everyone makes safety a priority this year and adds ‘always wearing your seat belt’ to their list of New Year’s resolutions,” **Police Chief David Flory** said. “Unfortunately, too many of our drivers and passengers, particularly teens, still take the attitude that a serious car crash will never happen to them, but these tragedies can and do happen all the time.”

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), teenage drivers and passengers still have not gotten the message about the importance of wearing a seat belt and are still one of the least likely groups to buckle up. In Texas, 47 percent of 371 teen passenger vehicle occupants, ages 16-20, were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2008 and were unrestrained at the time of the fatal crash. Had all these teens been wearing their seat belts almost half of them would have survived.

That’s why in an effort to save more lives, beginning February 22, **the Bedford Police Department** is joining with other State and local law enforcement agencies throughout Texas to step up seat belt enforcement during February with increased patrols and other special *Click It or Ticket* efforts to help ensure that more people –especially teens - always wear their seat belts when driving or riding in a motor vehicle.

“Sadly, too many Texas motorists still need a tough reminder to always wear their seat belt, so our officers are going to be out in force cracking down on those who are not buckled up,” said **Chief Flory**.

The Bedford Police said regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and to reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes. Nationally, of the passenger vehicle occupants involved in a fatal crash in 2008, the 73 percent that were restrained **survived** the crash.

“To help save more lives on Texas’ roadways, we’re going to make sure both teens and adults understand that wearing your seat belt costs you nothing, but not wearing it could cost you a ticket, or worse - your life,” **Flory** said. “No more exceptions. No more excuses. We want all drivers and passengers to always remember to buckle up day and night. *Click It or Ticket*.”

For more information on *Click It or Ticket*, please visit www.nhtsa.gov/link/CIOT.htm.

* According to NHTSA, all numbers and percentages referencing belted or unbelted fatalities are based on “Known Usage.”