



Van Meter Police Department
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For immediate release
November 20, 2015
Van Meter, Iowa

Thanksgiving sTEP Planned

VAN METER, Iowa – The Van Meter Police Department is the recipient of a GTSB grant to sTEP up enforcement for traffic safety. As such we will be participating in the GTSB sTEP enforcement week that encompasses the Thanksgiving weekend. Officers will increase patrols to ensure we have a safe holiday season starting Saturday November 21, 2015.

Thanksgiving weekend (6 p.m. Wednesday, November 25 – 6 a.m. Monday, November 30) is the busiest travel time of the year for American motorists. Unfortunately, more motorists on the roads increase the likelihood of traffic crashes. **Wearing a seat belt is the single most effective way to prevent injury or death in a crash.** The risk of a fatal injury goes down by 45% when seat-belted in a passenger car and 60% when in a light truck.

During the 2013 (the last year in which information is available) Thanksgiving weekend, there were 301 people, nationwide, lost their lives on roadways (two in Iowa), in which a staggering 58% were not wearing seat belts. Preliminary numbers indicate that there were three fatalities in Iowa during the same period in 2014. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), approximately 12,584 lives were saved by seat belts in 2013 and an additional 2,800 more could have been saved if everyone had worn seat belts.

Iowa has one of the highest seat belt compliance rates in the nation at 92.96 percent but the unbuckled 7.04 percent represent 46 percent of the fatalities. The Iowa Department of Public Safety's (DPS) Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau (GTSB) Chief Patrick Hoyer stated, "This is really troubling, almost half of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in crashes were not wearing their seat belts; we see way too many preventable fatalities in crashes."

The Van Meter Police Department and the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau reminds you that whether you are traveling near or far take a moment to simply buckle your seat belt.

Buckle Up America – Every Trip, Every Time!

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