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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 28, 2009

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53 Cited for Seat Belt Violations

Dover – Officers participating in a stepped up statewide enforcement effort to save lives by getting more Delawareans to buckle up, issued 53 citations for seat belt violations between October 19th – October 25th. This brings the total number of seat belt citations issued in the campaign to date to 595.

The enforcement and awareness mobilization, which launched August 1st, is part of a four-month long safety initiative created after results from observational seat belt surveys conducted by the Office of Highway Safety in June revealed that the state's 2009 statewide use rate declined from 91% last year to 88% this year. To date this year, 58% of drivers and passengers killed since January 1st have not been buckled up.

In addition to the seat belt citations issued in the last week, officers also apprehended one wanted individual, cited 12 for speeding, 4 for child restraint violations and 37 for other traffic violations. Eight county and municipal police agencies, primarily located in Sussex and New Castle Counties, are conducting either traffic safety patrols and/or checkpoints looking for unbuckled drivers and passengers. Enforcement is occurring both day and night and will continue through the end of November, including the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

Delaware law requires drivers and *all* passengers, including those in the back seat, to wear a seat belt. An officer can pull over a driver if he sees any person not wearing one. Delaware's law also requires correct use of the seat belt...which means the shoulder belt must be worn over the shoulder and not under the arm. Officers will be issuing citations for seat belt violations as part of a zero tolerance policy. The ticket, which goes to the driver no matter who

is unbuckled in the vehicle, is a \$25.00 fine plus court administrative fees, which can eventually total more than \$70.00.

For weekly updates on OHS's seat belt mobilization results please visit the Newsroom on the OHS website at www.ohs.delaware.gov . While there, bookmark the site in your RSS Reader. You can also follow OHS updates on our activities on Twitter at www.twitter.com/DEHighwaySafe .

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