

Seatbelt enforcement campaign begins near schools

(MSC News) Beginning February 26th and running through March 9th, the Kansas Highway Patrol and area law enforcement agencies will participate in the annual “High Visibility Seat Belt Enforcement Campaign” near area high schools.

The initiative is coupled with the Seat Belts Are for Everyone (SAFE) program in Kansas’ high schools. SAFE is a locally sustained program, administered by the students of the high school they attend. The focus is on reducing deaths and injuries on Kansas roadways.

Currently, 157 high schools from 71 counties participate in the SAFE program statewide.

In 2015, Kansas lost 13 high school teens in motor vehicle crashes. Of those teens, nearly 40 percent were not properly restrained.

KDOT’s Traffic Safety section is spearheading the two-week awareness campaign in hopes of decreasing serious injuries and crash fatalities by increasing seat belt usage. In 2015, the observed seat belt rate in Kansas for the ages of 15-17 was 85%. The seat belt usage rate for the same age group was 61% in 2008-09, which KDOT says demonstrates the SAFE program is making a difference for Kansas youth.

Among local law enforcement agencies participating in the seatbelt enforcement campaign are the Hiawatha Police Department, Horton Police Department and Brown County Sheriff’s Department.

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