

Press Release



Greene County Public Health
A Safe Communities Grantee of Ohio Department of Public Safety
Ohio State Highway Patrol-Traffic Safety Division
360 Wilson Drive, Xenia, OH 45385



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Click It Or Ticket Campaign Kicks Off With Event On May 14 In Xenia

XENIA, OH — The Greene County Public Health Safe Communities Coalition and the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is urging drivers to buckle up ahead of a national Click It or Ticket high-visibility seat belt enforcement effort. The national seat belt campaign, which coincides with the Memorial Day holiday, runs from May 20 to June 2, 2024.

“We want seat belt use to be an automatic habit for drivers and passengers alike,” said Loressa Gonyer, Safe Communities Coordinator. “It’s not just a safe thing to do — it’s the law. During the Click It or Ticket campaign, we’ll be working with our local law enforcement officers across the county to ensure the message gets out to drivers and passengers. Buckling up is the simplest thing you can do to limit injury and or save your life during a crash. We see the results of not wearing a seat belt all the time. We see the loss of life. So often, it could have been prevented.” The national seat belt use rate in 2023 was 91.9%, which is good — but it can be better. The other 8.1% still need to be reminded that seat belts save lives. During 2023 in Greene County, there were a total of 408 crashes where the driver and or the passenger(s) were unbelted, however the seat belt use rate was 91.4%. Participating law enforcement agencies will be taking a no-excuses approach to seat belt law enforcement, writing citations day and night.

One of the focuses of the Click It or Ticket campaign is nighttime enforcement. NHTSA data shows a higher number of unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities happen at night. Also, seat belt use differs among females and males. Of the males killed in crashes in 2021, more than half (54%) were unrestrained. For females killed in crashes, 42% were not buckled up. “If the enforcement effort alerts people to the dangers of unrestrained driving, we’ll consider our mission to be a success,” said Lt. Robert Hilderbrandt, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Xenia Post. “If you know a friend or a family member who does not buckle up when they drive, please ask them to consider changing their habits. Help us spread this lifesaving message before one more friend or family member is killed because of this senseless inaction. Seat belts save lives, and everyone — front seat and back, child and adult — needs to remember to buckle up.”

Greene County Safe Communities will hold a kickoff event on Tuesday, May 14 at 10:00am at the offices of Greene County Public Health located at 360 Wilson Drive in Xenia. This event will consist of a press conference, photo opportunities with law enforcement, and a friendly competition called the Quick-Click Challenge. This is a competition that demonstrates the ease of putting on and taking off a safety belt. Teams of four students and/or adults race against each other in this safety belt relay, reinforcing “buckle-up” behavior. Greene County Safe Communities Coalition will challenge the Clark

County Safe Communities Coalition via social media. Various police departments will be present with their vehicles in the photo opportunities.

For more information on the Click It or Ticket seat belt enforcement mobilization, please visit NHTSA.gov/ClickIt.

For more information about the Greene County Safe Communities Coalition, contact Loressa Gonyer at lgonyer@gcph.info or by phone at 937-374-5655.

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