



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Department of Public Safety

Ohio Department of Public Safety • Thomas P. Charles, Director  
[www.publicsafety.ohio.gov](http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**November 16, 2012**

**Contact:** Kristen Castle, Public Information Officer, 614-728-4623

### **ODPS Encourages Thanksgiving Travelers to Buckle Up. Every Trip. Every Time.**

COLUMBUS – The Thanksgiving holiday period is one of the busiest travel times of the year, and the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) wants to remind all travelers, whether they're traveling across the country or just across town, that one of the best ways to ensure a safe arrival is to buckle up, every trip, every time.

"While we have made great strides in seat belt use in our state, far too many people still die each year not wearing one," said ODPS Director Thomas P. Charles. "This Thanksgiving, I urge everyone to drive safely, drive sober, and buckle up day and night."

During last year's Thanksgiving holiday (Nov. 23 - Nov. 27, 2011), there were 17 fatalities; six of the people killed were not belted. To try to reduce those numbers and keep Ohioans safe as they travel, the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) and hundreds of local law enforcement agencies across the state will be out between now and Nov. 28 looking for aggressive, impaired or otherwise unsafe drivers.

Motorists and passengers should remember that a seat belt is always their best defense against an impaired driver. Local safety efforts are funded and coordinated by ODPS' Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS), which promotes educational programs, coalition-building efforts and campaigns focused on highway safety.

"The Thanksgiving holiday should be a joyous time for all families in Ohio, but far too often the celebration turns to tragedy on our state's highways," Colonel John Born, Patrol superintendent, said. "Simple things like planning ahead to designate a driver if you choose to consume alcohol, and insisting that everyone in the vehicle is buckled up before you leave, can go a long way toward ensuring these tragedies do not occur."

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, seat belts saved more than 12,500 lives nationwide during 2010 alone. Research shows that the risk of fatal injury to front seat passenger car occupants is reduced by 45 percent, and the risk of moderate to serious injury is reduced by 50 percent, when seat belts are worn correctly.

Troopers recommend that motorists contact the Patrol by calling #677 to report impaired drivers or drug activity.

###

*ODPS works to reduce deaths and injuries and improve the quality of life for Ohioans through the coordinated efforts of its Divisions, which include OSHP, OIU and OCJS. OSHP enforces traffic laws and OIU enforces liquor, tobacco and food stamp laws in liquor permit premises as well as works to educate bar owners and servers about liquor laws, including over-serving. OCJS funds the efforts of OVI Task Forces and other grants for law enforcement to combat impaired and unsafe driving and increase seat belt use. OCJS also promotes educational programs, coalition-building efforts and campaigns for highway safety.*