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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County Sheriff Urges Residents to Buckle Up

[Atlantic County] – Law enforcement officers from the Atlantic County Sheriff's Office will be cracking down on unbuckled motorists and passengers as part of the national "Click it or Ticket" campaign, focusing primarily in the evening hours when use is the lowest.

The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety will grant money to law enforcement agencies to aid in their participation of the annual initiative. This includes high visibility law enforcement seat belt checkpoints and saturation patrols, as well as local and national publicity designed to ensure that drivers and passengers recognize the life-saving value of seat belts.

Beginning May 18 and running through May 31, Sheriff's Officers will be enforcing the "Click it or Ticket" campaign through all of Atlantic County. "Other agencies are restricted to their specific towns when enforcing this campaign, but the Atlantic County Sheriff's Officers have jurisdiction through all of Atlantic County. We plan to leverage grant funds to benefit all county residents by allowing mobile patrols to cover as many roadways as possible, without limitation, providing safer streets and saving lives," said Atlantic County Sheriff Frank X. Balles.

"Using a seat belt is the simplest way for a driver and his or her passengers to protect themselves when traveling," said Gary Poedubicky, Acting Director of the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety. "In 2012 alone, seat belts saved an estimated 12,000 lives nationwide."

"Although we are reminded far too often by the unfortunate loss of life on our roadways, law enforcement officers must consistently raise awareness while educating drivers, as well as passengers, about the importance of remaining alert while on roadways and focusing solely on vehicle operation. No one should be permitted to ride in a vehicle you are operating without securing their seat belt," said Sheriff Balles.

During the 2014 "Click it or Ticket" campaign, 374 police agencies participated in the two-week initiative. As a result of the effort, law enforcement officers issued 26,635 seat belt citations, 4,363 speeding summonses, and made 944 drunk driving arrests.

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