

SEAT BELTS DO SAVE LIVES

Buckle up... no matter how far you're going.

Because the average person takes more trips around the neighborhood than long-distance ones, the chances of being involved in a car crash close to home are that much greater.

Therefore, it is no surprise that most deaths and serious collisions resulting in injuries happen in cars traveling under 65 km/h.

That is why it is important during every trip to make sure that you and everyone in your vehicle is wearing a seat belt or is properly harnessed in a child safety seat.

Remember, everyone has an equal chance of being in a collision so don't take chances on the safety of you and your fellow travelers.

And, wearing a seat belt is not only good sense
- in Alberta, it's the law.

Not only is it important to wear a seat belt, but it must be worn correctly to help reduce your chances of injury or death.

The shoulder belt should be worn as snugly as

possible to the body, over the shoulder - never under the arm since this could crush ribs and injure internal organs.

The lap belt should be firm against the body and worn low over the hips, not against the stomach.

SEAT BELTS AND AIR BAGS - FAST FACTS

Regardless of where or how safely you drive, sudden stops and collisions do happen.

By Alberta law, drivers must wear their seat belts and are responsible for ensuring that their passengers under 16 years of age are buckled up or secured in a child safety seat.

Here are some points to remember:

- Seat belts must be in proper working condition.
- A seat belt won't protect you if it is not worn properly. Take a few seconds to position the lap portion of your seat belt snug to your body and low on the hips. Never wear the shoulder strap under the arm where it could damage your ribs.

- A seat belt keeps the driver behind the wheel and in control in a collision. It helps keep your head and body from hitting the inside of the vehicle.
- A seat belt keeps you inside the vehicle during a collision, preventing you from being thrown through a windshield or door onto the roadway.
- Even if your vehicle is equipped with air bags, always wear your seat belt. If you don't, you may not be in the right position to benefit from the protection air bags provide.
- Remember, air bags do not protect you in a roll-over or side impact collision.

There are many good reasons to wear your seat belt:

- Seat belts hold you securely in place. If you are a driver, this helps you control the car in a crash situation.
- Seat belts slow down the second collision - the human collision. Even in a low-speed crash, a person not wearing a seat belt hits the inside of the car with the force of many times their own weight.

- Seat belts protect everyone in the vehicle.
- Serious injuries often result when people are thrown into each other during a crash. Seat belts can help prevent this hazard.
- Seat belts give you a greater chance of escaping serious injury. If you are not wearing your seat belt, you could be thrown from your vehicle:
 - through a windshield or door
 - into trees, telephone poles or rocks
 - or run over by your own or someone else's car.
- It is important to realize that air bags do not take the place of seat belts.
- When activated, airbags reduce the forward movement of the upper torso and minimize impact, but these inflatable crash devices are designed to provide protection in front crashes, not side or rear collisions or rollovers.
- With an air bag, you can still be thrown out of your car, so always wear your full seat belt assembly.
- Some people worry about the effect of seat belts in crashes which result in fire or

being submerged under water in a river or lake.

- Less than one-half of one per cent of injury causing crashes have these results and even if they do, a seat belt can save your life by keeping you unhurt and alert, allowing you to escape.
- There is no reason for a pregnant woman not to wear a seat belt.
- If she is concerned about her baby, she must realize that keeping herself alive is the first step in protecting her unborn child.
- Pregnant women should always wear both lap and shoulder belt, sitting as upright as possible.
- The lap belt should be worn low so it pulls downward on the pelvic bones, not directly against the abdomen.

Children and the seat belt law

Under Alberta's seat belt law, drivers are responsible for ensuring that passengers under the age of 16 are properly buckled up.

Responsibility includes paying the fine if convicted of not having the child correctly secured by the seat belt or a child safety seat.