



# Auburn Police Department



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## FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

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### BUCKLE UP AMERICA

Safety should be everyone's top priority and Chief Phil Crowell today reminds all Auburn citizens that saving a life is a snap. *Buckle Up America* encourages everyone on the road to use seat belts and restraints and to use them properly.

"Seat belts are the most effective lifesaving feature in a vehicle," said Chief Crowell. "However, they only work if you use them and use them correctly. It only takes a second to snap the buckle on a seat belt, but the benefits can last you a lifetime."

Nearly one in five Americans still fail to buckle up regularly and too many children still don't use their seat belts or child safety seats.

In 1998, the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), developed a national initiative to increase seat belt use to 85 percent by the year 2000 and to 90 percent by 2005. The latest national seat belt use rate was 85 percent in 2010.

"You have too much to lose if you don't buckle up", said Chief Crowell. "Using a seat belt will halve your chances of being killed or badly injured in a serious crash, and using the proper age-appropriate car seat in a passenger car will reduce your infant's chance of fatal injury by 71 percent and your toddler's by 54 percent."

According to research compiled by NHTSA, from 1975 through 2009 an estimated 9,310 children under age 5 were saved by child restraints (car seats or adult seat belts).

All States have laws requiring infants and toddlers to ride in car seats, but children still ride unprotected, and the consequences are frightening. According to NHTSA, fully 31 percent of passenger vehicle occupants under 5 who were fatally injured in crashes in 2009 were riding unrestrained.

"Let's use *Buckle Up America!* Commit to wearing seat belts on every trip, ensuring that everyone who rides in our cars is buckled up and that all children 12 and younger ride in the back seat in properly installed restraints appropriate for their age and size," Chief Crowell said. "Remember; never place a rear-facing infant seat in front of an air bag. Drivers and front-seat passengers should maintain at least a 10-inch distance between themselves and their air bags. While we cannot always avoid a crash, we can take the responsibility to do everything in our power to protect ourselves and our loved ones." *Buckle Up America, Every Trip. Every Time.*

For more information on seat belt safety, visit <http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov>

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