



*****For Immediate Release*****

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WSP urges drivers to fasten their seatbelts before hitting the road

BREMERTON – The Washington State Patrol (WSP) is imploring drivers to fasten their seatbelts before hitting the roads this summer in light of multiple serious injury and one fatality collision in District 8.

According to the Washington State Traffic Commission (WSTC), 22 percent of all traffic deaths involved someone who was not wearing a seatbelt.

Of all the collisions investigated by WSP District 8 troopers from January 2014 to June 2019, only 3 percent were not wearing their safety belts. However, unbelted drivers constituted for 42 percent of fatality collisions and 39 percent of serious injury collisions.

So far this summer, two drivers were ejected from their vehicles in collisions at the end of June, resulting in both being airlifted to Harborview Medical Center in Seattle with serious injuries. This month four unbelted drivers were seriously hurt and one killed.

A 40-year-old Sequim man was ejected and killed in early July from not wearing his seatbelt after his vehicle rolled over on State Route 101 east of Port Angeles.

More recently, a 31-year-old Poulsbo woman was not wearing her seatbelt and suffered serious, but not life threatening injuries when she allegedly fell asleep at the wheel Thursday afternoon on eastbound State Route 16 near Mullenix Road.

Had any of the drivers been wearing a safety belt, the outcome could likely have been much different.

“WSP takes a no tolerance approach to not wearing this important life-saving piece of vehicle equipment,” said WSP District 8 Captain James Mjor. “Data consistently supports that by using your seatbelt you significantly increase the likelihood of surviving, even some of the most moderate of vehicle collisions. We must not forget the importance of child safety as well when it comes to protecting our most important asset - our children.”

District 8 serves Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Pacific and Wahkiakum counties.

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