

Delaware General Health District

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NEWS RELEASE

‘CLICK IT OR TICKET’ SEAT BELT ENFORCEMENT MOBILIZATION STARTING

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Patricia Ranney, left, and her husband Bernie listen as Ohio State Highway Patrol Trooper Stephanie Hanner describes the head-on April 2009 crash on U.S. 23S which killed another driver and left Mrs. Ranney seriously injured. Mrs. Ranney was honored for using her seat belt.

DELAWARE, Oh., May 24, 2010 – Delaware County’s law enforcement agencies kicked off the “Click It or Ticket” seat belt enforcement blitz today after hearing a driver thank her seat belt for saving her life in a head-on crash.

From today through June 6, law enforcement officers will ticket motorists they see riding without seat belts. The nationwide mobilization aims to reduce highway deaths by cracking down on motorists who fail to buckle up.

At a kickoff ceremony this morning, local law officers heard from Patricia Ranney of Worthington, who survived a head-on crash on U.S. 23S in Orange Township on April 18, 2009. Mrs. Ranney suffered eight broken ribs and wrist and knee injuries, and spent five weeks in rehabilitation. The other driver, who was drug-impaired and crossed the center line, died in the crash.

Mrs. Ranney was reunited with the Franklin County Deputy Sheriff who was the first responder at the crash scene, the investigating trooper, and the Worthington firefighters who took her to the hospital and telephoned her husband about the crash.

“I have worn seat belts for a long time. The sign today says ‘Click It or Ticket,’ but I say ‘Click it, use it, and enjoy your life,’” said Mrs. Ranney, who celebrated her 50th wedding anniversary after the crash.

The Delaware County Safe Communities Coalition, a Delaware General Health District safety program, encourages all motorists to always buckle up whenever they get into a vehicle. Regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes. Front-seat passengers face significantly less risk of death in a crash if they are properly restrained in seat belts.

Surveys conducted by the Delaware County Safe Communities-Safe Kids Program and similar groups throughout Central Ohio showed an average seat belt usage rate above 82 percent, but the rate was below 80 percent for male drivers, drivers aged 15-25, African-Americans, and pickup truck drivers.

Participants in the Delaware County Safe Communities Coalition include the Ohio Highway Patrol, the Delaware County Sheriff’s Office, Delaware City Police, Genoa Township Police, and local fire departments and emergency medical services. Officers from these departments kicked off the mobilization at today’s ceremony at the Frank B. Willis Government Building. They also saw demonstrations of “The Convincer,” a machine that propels test dummies in crash simulations, as well as cars demolished in fatal crashes.