

HAWTHORNE POLICE DEPARTMENT



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STEER CLEAR OF HAWTHORNE POLICE BY BUCKLING UP

Price of Seatbelt Ticket Rises to \$132

Hawthorne, Calif. – Keep you and your family safe and \$132 in your wallet by making sure everyone wears their seat belts for every trip. That's the message that the Hawthorne Police Department is telling drivers as part of the 2009 start-of-summer *Click It or Ticket* mobilization, May 18 - 31. Fines and fees have gone from under \$100 previously to \$132 this year for first time adult seat belt violations. For children under 16, the fine is now \$435 for the first time offense.

No warnings will be given out, as the Hawthorne Police Department will be aggressively enforcing the state's occupant protection laws. The *Click It or Ticket* campaign relies on heavy enforcement and public education as a means to help save lives on California's roadways.

"Seat belts save thousands of lives every year," said Chief Mike Heffner. "Buckling up will not only save you a heavy fine, it can also save your life. We're not giving warnings. It's Click It or Ticket."

Currently California has a seat belt usage rate of 95.7 percent, but that still means over one half million people are not buckling up. Properly restrained drivers, passengers and children have a 50 percent better chance of surviving a crash than unbelted occupants. Those ejected from vehicles in crashes or roll-overs are up to 35 times more likely to die than restrained occupants.

"Buckling up just makes sense," said Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety. "It takes only two seconds for an action that can make the difference whether you or your family gets home today."

More than 90 local law enforcement agencies statewide and the CHP will be participating in this year's *Click It or Ticket* mobilization. Funding to support California's *Click It or Ticket* campaign was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.