



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF**

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**ANDERSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

**SHERIFF PAUL N. WHITE**

November 22, 2010

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **Thanksgiving Traffic Safety**

With the holidays upon us and millions of Americans hitting the roads, the Anderson County Sheriff's Department wants everyone to arrive safely at their destinations. While seat belt use is at a record high of 85% nationwide, 45 million Americans still fail to buckle up when they get in a motor vehicle. According to statistics from the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, on any given day about 38 passenger vehicle occupants who are not buckled up are killed in motor vehicle crashes.

In 2008 alone, nearly 13,000 unbuckled passenger vehicle occupants lost their lives on U.S. roadways. It is estimated that nearly one third of these lives could have been saved if they had been properly belted. NHTSA statistics also show that those least likely to buckle up are teens; young adults; males; nighttime riders; motorists traveling on rural roads; and individuals traveling in pickup trucks.

The 2008 Thanksgiving holiday was no different, from Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, to Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1,120 passenger vehicle occupants were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Tragically, more than half of those killed were not wearing their seat belts at the time of the crash.

*"Sadly, the holidays, which for many are the happiest time of the year, is also one of the deadliest and most tragic,"* said Sheriff Paul White. *"Wearing a seat belt costs you nothing – not wearing it could you cost you your life."*

Regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes, according to NHTSA. Research has shown that when lap and shoulder belts are used properly, the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants is reduced by 45% , and the risk of moderate to serious injury is reduced by 50%.

Sheriff's deputies will be out in force working with the Tennessee Highway Patrol during the holidays to keep our roads safe and accident free. This effort is supported by a grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation, Governor's Highway Safety Office.

For more information about highway safety during Thanksgiving, please visit [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov](http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov) .