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Seat Belt Usage Increasing in Vermont
Survey shows highest rate of reported usage

August 13, 2018 / Montpelier, Vt. – The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) reports that Vermont’s 2018 seat belt usage rate was surveyed to be 89.8 percent – the highest measured rate to date in the state.

Seat belt use is required by law. Unbelted motorists are statistically over represented in motor vehicle fatalities. To date in 2018 in Vermont, over 60 percent of motor vehicle crashes resulting in a fatality involved motorists that were unbelted when a seat belt was available.

“We are encouraged by the increase in seat belt usage throughout Vermont,” said Transportation Secretary Joe Flynn. “The survey results show that seatbelt usage is headed in the right direction and that’s helping to keep Vermonters safer. I strongly recommend all Vermonters and all those visiting our state drive safe, enjoy all we have to offer, and buckle-up.”

The 2018 results represent an increase in seat belt usage rates of five percentage points over 2017 results, which was 84 percent. Nationally, the seat belt usage rate in 2017 was 89.7 percent. The previous peak seat belt usage rate measured was 86 percent in 2008. This year’s survey results give Vermont one of the highest seat belt usage rates in New England.

The Governor’s Highway Safety Program, in collaboration with VTrans, the Vermont Department of Public Safety, the Vermont Department of the Health, and the Vermont Highway Safety Alliance, work together to educate motorists about the safety advantages of wearing seat belts. VTrans seeks to provide the safest transportation system possible, however motorists can increase their personal safety by staying alert, driving cautiously and wearing seat belts whenever they are in a motor vehicle.

Roadside seat belt usage observations were conducted from June 1st through June 14th at 89 locations throughout Vermont. The sites were selected in a manner prescribed and approved by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). NHTSA requires every state to conduct annual seat belt usage rate surveys.

Annual seat belt survey reports can be found at ghsp.vermont.gov/content/reports-and-data.

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