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NEWS RELEASE

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CLICK IT OR TICKET CAMPAIGN

The Plano Police Department announced today it is joining with hundreds of other law enforcement agencies across the country in renewing a pledge to save lives by intensifying efforts to enforce seat belt laws — among all motorists and around the clock — during the 2008 *Click It or Ticket* mobilization, which runs from May 19 – June 1.

In 2006, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 15,046 passenger vehicle occupants were killed between the nighttime hours of 6 p.m. and 5:59 a.m. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of those killed at night were NOT wearing seat belts — compared to less than half (46%) of the passenger vehicle occupants killed during daytime hours.

Along with nighttime motorists, men — particularly young men — are among those less likely to buckle up. In 2006, 73 percent of male passenger vehicle occupants between the ages of 18 and 34 who were killed in crashes were NOT wearing seat belts.

In fact, all young people are at greatly increased risk. Sixty-four percent of teenage passenger vehicle occupants killed in fatal crashes during 2006 were NOT wearing seat belts at the time of the crashes. And the 2006 observed seat belt usage rate of those 16 to 24 was lower than any other age group.

“With 18 percent of all Americans failing to buckle up regularly, it’s clear that far too many people still don’t take belt laws seriously,” Rick McDonald, Public Information Officer for the Plano Police Department said. Among some groups, especially young men, the unbuckled rate is especially high — and the fatal crash rate increases significantly at night. So look for us to be out on the streets day and night from mid-May through June 1st making sure that everyone is buckled up.”

Officer McDonald said, “Worn correctly, seat belts have proven to reduce the risk of fatal injury in a crash by 45 percent for front-seat passenger vehicle occupants and by 60 percent in pickup trucks, SUVs, and minivans. In fact, data shows that more than three-quarters (77%) of passenger vehicle occupants who were in a serious crash in 2006 and were buckled up survived the crash.”

Increased law enforcement activities, including seat belt checkpoints, will be conducted nationwide during the 2008 *Click It or Ticket* mobilization. Paid national advertising, as well as State advertising, will support the mobilization by promoting the life-saving benefits of regular seat belt use, especially nighttime belt use, to all motorists.

“Regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect people and reduce motor vehicle crash fatalities. And high-visibility enforcement is effective at getting people to buckle up,” said Officer Rick McDonald. “Wearing your seat belt is easy and it costs you nothing. Not wearing it might cost you a ticket, or worse — your life. I urge everyone in Plano to please be safe and buckle up day and night — *Click It or Ticket*.”

To learn more about the *Click It or Ticket* campaign and the lifesaving benefits of wearing your seat belt, please visit www.nhtsa.gov.