

Seat belt-related deaths hit a 10-year low

Seeing seat belt-related deaths on OPP-patrolled roads shrink from 120 in 2005 to 50 last year (2014) has police optimistic about the growing importance road users are placing on using proper restraints when driving.

"We are proud to see Ontarians come such a long way with seat belt safety over the past 10 years," said Chief Superintendent Chuck Cox. "In spite of the steady progress, we need all road users to start recognizing the significant role a seat belt plays in increasing one's chances of surviving a road crash and reducing the severity of injuries."

Over the past 10 years (2005 to 2014), 856 people have died in road crashes in which not wearing a seat belt was a causal factor in their deaths. More than two thirds of the deceased were males (646) and 210 were females. The majority of those who died were drivers (611) and 245 were passengers.

The human
collision

The OPP is issuing an important reminder to passengers, in particular those who sit in the back seat.

When a collision occurs with unbuckled passengers in the backseat, this can set a deadly stage for person-to-person impact. People in the front seat are often struck by unbelted backseat passengers who become high-speed projectiles inside the vehicle, sometimes contributing to the death of those who were wearing a seat belt and might have otherwise survived.

It takes more than seat belts to keep people safe on the road.

Over and above seat belt compliance, OPP are counting on motorists to drive within posted speed limits, not allow themselves to be distracted while driving and to not drive if consuming alcohol or drugs.