

## **Saving Lives During *Click It or Ticket***

The Holden Police Department in partnership with the Highway Safety Division of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, the Massachusetts State Police, and more than 200 Massachusetts police departments will take part in the national *Click It or Ticket* campaign between May 9<sup>th</sup> and May 23<sup>rd</sup>. This high-visibility enforcement campaign will promote seat belt use through increased traffic enforcement. The campaign is funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

“Our goal is to save lives,” said Chief David Armstrong. “As we kick-off the busy summer driving season, it is crucial that all motorists buckle up every time they go out, day and night – no excuses. Our officers are prepared to ticket anyone who is not wearing their seat belt, including drivers who have neglected to properly buckle their children.”

The national seat belt usage rate is 88.5% (NHTSA). Massachusetts is falling behind at 74%, with a 3% reduction in usage rate between 2014 and 2015.

In Massachusetts, many fatally injured occupants are unbuckled. According to NHTSA, in 2014, nearly half of the 21,022 passenger vehicle occupants killed in crashes across the country were unrestrained.

“While these may just sound like statistics, local police know from personal experience that those numbers represent mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and friends in Holden,” said Jeff Larason, Director of the Highway Safety Division. “If we increase our seat belt usage rate, we save lives, and that’s why the police are out enforcing this important law.”

As part of the *Click It or Ticket* mobilization, at 6:00 pm on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, state and local police departments including Holden will join law enforcement agencies across the East Coast in mobilizing the “Border to Border” Operation. This initiative provides increased seat belt enforcement at state borders, sending a ‘zero tolerance’ message to the public: driving or riding unbuckled will result in a ticket, no matter what state, no matter what time.