

Don't "Text it or Talk it" Either During "Click it or Ticket" Patrols in Grays Harbor

Local News

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Posted on : May 13, 2013 at 8:47 am

MONTESANO, Wash. - Unbuckled AND distracted drivers will be the target when "Click it or Ticket" Patrols return to Grays Harbor County. Beginning next week, motorists can expect to see law enforcement patrolling city and county roads in search of unbuckled drivers and passengers and drivers using their cell phones. Ever wonder why Washington has one of the highest seat belt use rates in the country? It is due, in large part, to the highly visible "Click It or Ticket" campaign which includes publicity, extra enforcement, and signage. In June 2002, when the primary seat belt law went into effect, approximately 82 percent of Washington drivers wore seat belts and today, nearly 97 percent of Washington drivers are buckling up. Now, it's time to focus on another important traffic safety concern — distracted drivers who are texting and talking on their cell phones! Between May 20 and June 2, motorists in Grays Harbor County can expect to see law enforcement patrolling city and county roads in search of unbuckled drivers and passengers and drivers using their cell phones. Last year, during this same time period, officers on routine and extra patrols statewide issued 3,171 seat belt violations amongst the 11,047 motorists who were stopped. Similarly, last year during this time period, 1,059 cell phone violations were written. However, taking a historical look, in 2010, (the same year cell phone use became a primary law in Washington), only 63 drivers were cited statewide.

In Grays Harbor County, the Aberdeen, Cosmopolis, Elma, Hoquiam, Montesano and Ocean Shores Police Departments, the Grays Harbor County Sheriff's Office and the Washington State Patrol will be teaming up and participating in these extra patrols, with the support of the Grays Harbor Target Zero Traffic Safety Task Force. These and all extra patrols are part of Target Zero — striving to end traffic deaths and serious injuries in Washington by 2030. For more information, visit www.targetzero.com. Additional information on the Washington Traffic Safety Commission can be found on the website, www.wtsc.wa.gov.