

## For Click It or Ticket, officers buckle down on seat belt use



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Buckling up is always the law, but Texas transportation officials will soon launch their 13th annual Click It or Ticket campaign aimed at encouraging drivers to wear their seat belts.

The campaign runs May 19 to June 1, and motorists caught without a seat belt on could receive fines and court costs of up to \$200.

"It's difficult for me to understand why you wouldn't do something to better your chance of living," Dallas County Sheriff Lupe Valdez said Tuesday during a kickoff event at Dallas City Hall. "If you were gambling and I said I know something that would give you a 40-60 percent advantage, you would be dumb not to take it.

"Then why do you gamble with your life?"

Dallas police issued 7,843 seat belt tickets in 2013 and 1,519 child safety citations. There were also 263 crashes in Dallas last year with serious or fatal injuries involving people who were not wearing seat belts.

In 2002, when Click It or Ticket began, 76 percent of Texans wore seat belts. Now only about 10 percent of the state's motorists don't comply with the law, said William Hale, Dallas district engineer for the Texas Department of Transportation. But Hale said that's not good enough.

"Our mission is zero," he said.

The 13-day campaign will cost about \$1.5 million in TxDOT and federal funding, said Robert Nash, director of public relations for Sherry Matthews Advocacy Marketing.

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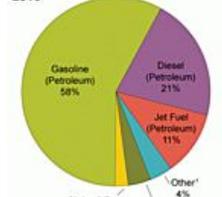


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