

HIGHWAY SAFETY IS A PERSONAL AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

BUCKLE UP

Seatbelts are also called "safety belts" for a reason. Wearing safety belts can double your chances of surviving a crash and avoiding serious injury. Virginia law requires drivers and front seat passengers to use seatbelts when traveling in motor vehicles. A driver transporting anyone age 15 and younger must ensure the child is properly secured in a safety belt, booster seat or child safety seat, no matter where the child is seated in the vehicle.

AVOID DISTRACTIONS

Driving requires your full attention. There are many distractions that may prevent you from focusing on the road: adjusting your music, talking to passengers, observing outside surroundings, eating, talking on your cell phone, text messaging and more. Virginia law prohibits drivers under age 18 from using cell phones or any other wireless communication device while driving, except in an emergency after the vehicle is parked.

SHARE THE ROAD

Drivers of passenger vehicles share the road with many other users: pedestrians, bicyclists, moped and motorcycle riders, large trucks and buses, recreational vehicles and other vehicles of all shapes and sizes. It is your responsibility to adjust your driving to avoid others' mistakes and assure everyone's safety. Be courteous, stay alert and provide a space cushion around your vehicle at all times. Communicate with other motorists by using turn signals, and keep your headlights on so they can easily see you.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO BE SAFER ON VIRGINIA'S HIGHWAYS

DRIVE DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE

Legally, you are driving under the influence if your blood alcohol content (BAC) is 0.08 percent or higher. That level can be reached in the average person with only one drink. If your driving is impaired, you can be convicted of driving under the influence with a BAC lower than 0.08 percent. If your driving is impaired because you are under the influence of any drug, you may face the same penalties as driving under the influence of alcohol: fines, license revocation and jail time. Virginia's Zero Tolerance law makes driving under the influence of any amount of alcohol a serious criminal offense for drivers under age 21.

OBEY SPEED LIMITS

A speed limit is the maximum legal speed you can travel on a road under ideal conditions. You may drive slower than the posted speed, but it is illegal to drive any faster. In addition, driving significantly faster than vehicles around you can result in tailgating, distracting other drivers, aggressive driving, or worse – a deadly crash.

For more information on Virginia's Highway Safety Challenge, visit www.safeVAhighways.org.

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Are you Virginia's next traffic fatality?



HIGHWAY SAFETY CHALLENGE

www.safeVAhighways.org

ARE YOU VIRGINIA'S NEXT TRAFFIC FATALITY?

Hundreds of people are killed or injured on Virginia's highways each year. Highway crashes are one of the leading causes of death in the commonwealth. The victims are our family members, friends, neighbors and co-workers. These deaths are preventable.

Changing driver behavior is the single most effective tool for reducing highway deaths. All drivers are encouraged to take Virginia's Highway Safety Challenge. Here is what you can do to be safer on Virginia's highways:

- ✚ Buckle up
- ✚ Avoid distractions
- ✚ Share the road
- ✚ Drive drug and alcohol free
- ✚ Obey speed limits

2007 FATALITY FACTS*

- ✚ Sixty-one percent of all persons killed were not wearing seatbelts.
- ✚ Distractions cause crashes. Not watching the road, looking at roadside incidents and driving fatigued were the top three distractions that accounted for 43 percent of all distraction-related fatal crashes.
- ✚ Bicyclists, motorcyclists, pedestrians and large truck fatalities accounted for 20 percent of all deaths.
- ✚ Nearly 40 percent of all fatal crashes involved alcohol use.
- ✚ Speeding led to 43 percent of highway deaths.

Most crashes can be avoided. If every driver takes personal responsibility for his or her behavior at the wheel, fewer people will die on our highways.

Each time you get behind the wheel, take a second before turning the key, and ask: **could I be Virginia's next traffic fatality?** What can I do to save my life and the lives of those around me?

**Fatality Facts based on 2007 data provided by DMV Virginia Highway Safety Office.*



Brooke Hammill, Varina High School student at a Highway Safety Challenge news conference at Varina High School, Henrico County, October 2, 2007:

"My friend and classmate, Ashley Leper, died in a car accident on April 27, 2007. Ashley was a fun and talented person, who always kept me laughing. She was 18 years old, and then, in an instant, she was gone. Her family is devastated. Her friends miss her dearly. And her dreams will never be fulfilled."



Don't be Virginia's next traffic fatality.