

Driver Safety Letter

presented by



Buckle Up

February 2018

Great news! The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has announced that safety belt usage by commercial truck and bus drivers rose to a new record level of 86% in 2016, compared to just 65% usage in 2007, according to the results of a national survey.

"Buckling up your safety belt, regardless of the type of vehicle you drive or ride in, remains the simplest, easiest and most effective step you can take toward helping to protect your life," said FMCSA Deputy Administrator Cathy F. Gautreaux. "While it is good news that we are making strong progress, we need to continue to emphasize that everyone, everywhere securely fasten their safety belt 100% of the time."

Since 2007, FMCSA, in collaboration with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has conducted the *Safety Belt Usage by Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers Survey* six times. In each survey, safety belt usage by commercial drivers has been shown to be steadily increasing.

The 2016 survey observed nearly 40,000 commercial drivers operating medium- to heavy-duty trucks and buses at more than 1,000 roadside sites nationwide. The survey found that safety belt usage for commercial drivers and their occupants was highest by trucks and buses traveling on expressways at 89%, compared to 83% on surface streets. Male truck and bus drivers outpaced their female counterparts by buckling-up at a rate of 86% to 84%, respectively.

Since the inception of this study in 2007, overall safety belt use for drivers has steadily increased each year from a use rate of 65% in 2007 to the current high of 86%.

States with "secondary" seat belt laws (law enforcement officers may only stop drivers for violations other than not being buckled) have nearly matched states with "primary" seat belt laws (officers can stop and ticket drivers and occupants for simply not wearing a safety belt) – 84% compared to 85% – in the most recent survey.

Other highlights from this study:

- The usage rate for drivers and other occupants in the West, Midwest, and South were 87% compared to the Northeast at 71%.
- CMV driver and occupant safety belt usage stands at 84% for females and 86% for males, which is a slight increase from 2013.
- Usage rates were higher on expressways (89%) compared to surface streets (83%).
- Safety belt usage in heavy traffic (86%) continues to be higher than in light traffic (83%).

Keep up the good work and keep it buckled!



The NPTC Monthly Driver Safety Letter, jointly sponsored by NPTC and [CPC Logistics, Inc.](http://CPCLogistics.com), is a Microsoft Word document that you can print out and post as is, if appropriate, or modify any way you wish to make it a better fit for your drivers, including adding your company logo. If you are already doing an in-house letter, you may find information here that you can cut and paste into your own letter. If you are interested in specific subjects, or have any comments/feedback, contact Tom Moore, CTP, at tmoores@nptc.org or (703)838-8898.