



# Click It or Ticket Evaluation, 2008–2009

*Click It or Ticket* (CIOT) is a high-visibility enforcement program to increase seat belt use. *Click It or Ticket* was adopted as a national program in 2003 and is credited with steady increases in seat belt use across the Nation. In 2009, seat belt use rates exceeded 90 percent in 14 States; Michigan had the highest rate of 98 percent. Not every driver buckled up on every trip, however, and some States lagged significantly behind the national belt rate of 84 percent in 2009. Seat belt use was below 80 percent in 14 States including two States that were below 70 percent. NHTSA coordinated the 2008 and 2009 CIOT campaigns to encourage more improvements in all 50 States and the District of Columbia.

## Paid Advertising and Public Awareness

The level of paid advertising was less than previous mobilizations mainly because an extended television writers' strike affected purchase plans in 2008. As a result, the national media campaign changed strategy, spending less on television and more on radio and alternative publicity sources such as Web sites, video games, and online ads, continuing this strategy into 2009. This strategy likely contributed to lower gross rating points, reach, and frequency of the messages.

The public continue to be aware of CIOT seat belt enforcement messages. In 2009, slogan recognition reached 77 percent among all drivers and 82 percent among high-risk drivers, men 18 to 34 years old. About four out of every five drivers know the CIOT slogan. The CIOT model increases compliance with seat belt laws by raising drivers' perceived risk of getting seat belt tickets if they drive unbuckled. CIOT works by combining vigorous enforcement with intensive media and messaging about the seat belt enforcement. National telephone surveys found that drivers' perceived risk of receiving tickets for not wearing seat belts increased over the course of the 2008 mobilization and reached its highest level on record. Two out of every five drivers believed they would "very likely" receive a ticket for not wearing seat belts. Support for belt

use laws and enforcement of belt use laws remained relatively strong. Support for a primary law remains strong; 72 percent in 2008 and 75 percent in 2009.

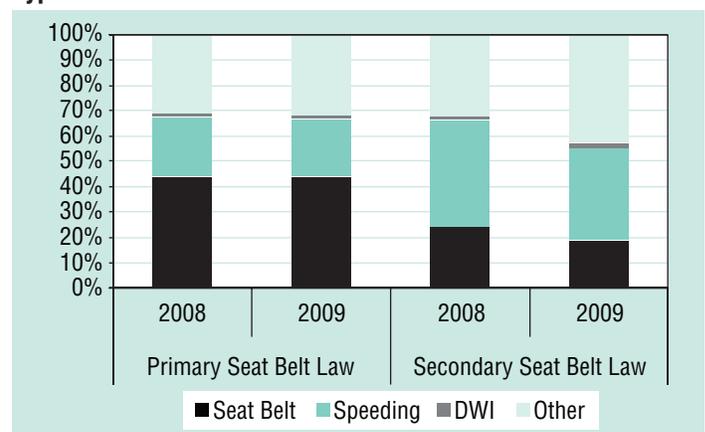
## Enforcement Activity

The 2008 CIOT campaign continued a four-year decline in the number of seat belt citations issued. The 50 States and the District of Columbia reported a combined total of 583,372 seat belt citations issued in 2008, and 570,545 in 2009, or 19 citations per 10K population. While lower, this citation rate is comparable to the citation rate of past successful CIOT programs (20 citations per 10K).

**Table 1: State and DC Reported CIOT Activity 2003–2009**

CIOT Year	Law Enforcement Agencies	Seat Belt Citations Issued	Belt Citations per 10K
2003	10,506	508,492	18
2004	13,173	657,305	22
2005	9,761	727,271	25
2006	10,623	697,115	23
2007	10,125	672,574	22
2008	10,908	583,372	19
2009	10,772	570,545	19

**Figure 1: Proportion of Citations by Citation Type and Law Type 2008 and 2009 CIOT**



Primary law States issued 24 citations per 10K population, while secondary law States issued 10 citations per 10K population. In 2009, these rates were 23 and

11 citations per 10K population, respectively. In secondary law States, the police must first observe a driver for another driving offense before they can issue a seat belt citation. This potentially contributes to the lower number of seat belt citations issued in these States.

## Seat Belt Use

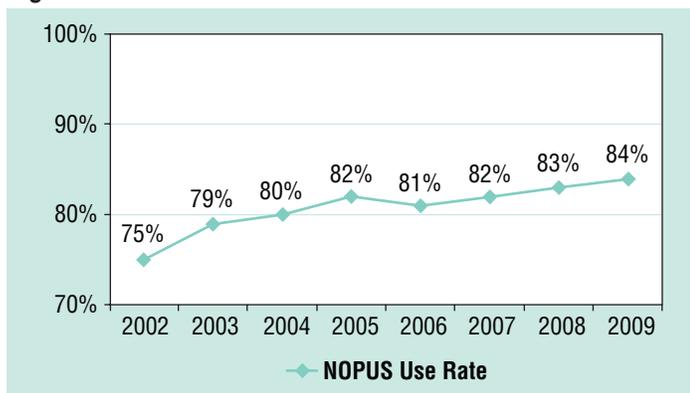
Seat belt use rates were generally higher in States with primary enforcement compared to those with secondary seat belt laws. Belt use rates ranged from 71 percent to 97 percent in 2008 and from 75 percent to 98 percent in 2009 in States with primary enforcement. Secondary law States ranged from 66 percent to 91 percent in 2008 and from 68 percent to 91 percent in 2009.

**Table 2: Statewide Belt Use Rates CIOT 2008 and 2009**

Year	Belt Use	50 States, DC, and Puerto Rico	Primary Law States	Less than Full Primary Law States
2008	Low	66.8%	71.3%	66.8%
	High	97.2%	97.2%	90.9%
	Median	85%	90.5%	80.6%
2009	Low	67.6%	74.5%	67.6%
	High	98%	98%	91%
	Median	85.6%	90.1%	80.9%

The National Occupant Protection Usage Survey (NOPUS), the only probability-based, daytime, observational survey across the United States, measured the nationwide seat belt use at 84 percent, the highest national seat belt use rate to date. The national use rate has increased about one percentage point each of the last three years.

**Figure 2: National Belt Use Rates 2002–2009**



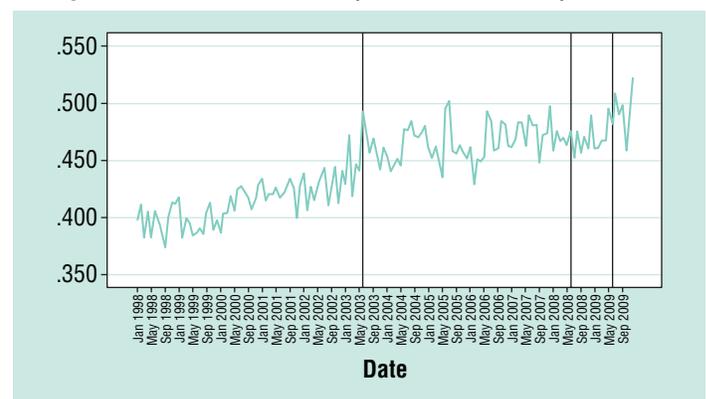
U.S. Department of Transportation  
**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**  
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Over the years, however, annual improvements in seat belt use rates have declined. The average annual improvement was greatest in the early years of CIOT, from 2002 to 2003 (+3.4 percentage points), followed by the next two years (+2.3 and +1.9 points). For three of the last four years, increases have remained steady at one percentage point. Since there are 208.3 million licensed drivers in America, one percentage point translates into slightly more than 2 million additional drivers who buckled up each year.

## FARS

NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) is a census of all fatal crashes in the United States. The figure shows the monthly proportion of belt use for fatalities from January 1998 to December 2009 for front-seat passenger vehicle occupants 15 and older. Seat belt use among fatally injured crash victims is consistently lower than observed belt use. There was a significant increase in the proportion of belted fatally injured occupants in the 79-month period following the 2003 *Click It or Ticket* campaign compared to what would have been expected from the preceding 65 month trend (41% to 47%). The average monthly belt use in fatal crashes remained steady in 2008 at 47 percent, increasing to 49 percent from June to December 2009.

**Figure 3: Monthly Proportion of Belted Fatally Injured Occupants of Motor Vehicles (FARS 1998–2009)**



## How to Order

Download a copy of *Click It or Ticket Evaluation, 2008–2009* (44 pages plus appendices), prepared by Preusser Research Group, from <http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811536.pdf>.

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