



### **Police Department**

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As a participant in the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau (GTSB) program the North Liberty Police Department conducted a seat belt usage survey of motorists traveling in North Liberty during the month of March. The results of the survey are reported to GTSB who compiles data collected from other communities across Iowa to compute the overall state usage rate.

The usage rate in North Liberty during this most recent survey was 95%. This rate has been fairly constant for North Liberty over the last few years but does represent a slight increase over surveys conducted last year (94% compliance). It is slightly above the overall state average and is well above the overall national rate.

Through the examination of crash data, proper seat belt usage has often been shown to prevent and/or reduce the occurrence of serious injury or death during motor vehicle crashes.

Below are key points of the current Iowa Seat Belt Law (Iowa Code 321.445):

- Applies to all front seat occupants
- Applies to rear seat occupants up to the age of 18
- Vehicle must be in forward motion
- Applies to both Iowa and out-of-state vehicles
- Belt systems must be used properly
  - Belt across lap, not stomach
  - Strap over shoulder, not under arm or behind back
- Belts must be present as produced by manufacturer – not removed or disconnected
- Failure to use is probable cause to stop a vehicle:
  - An officer may investigate suspected violation
- Driver and passengers may be cited separately

Failure to comply with the seat belt law may result in a citation that carries a \$50 fine plus court costs/surcharge for a current total fine of \$127.50.