



**Police Department**

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Recently the North Liberty Police Dept., as part of the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau (GTSB) program, conducted a seat belt usage survey of motorists traveling within the city limits. Front seat occupants were observed using seat belts at a rate of 94.8%. This usage rate has remained relatively stable over the past few years with surveys being conducted semi-annually. It is slightly higher than the reported statewide usage rate for 2012 which is 92.38%.

Research has proven that seat belts are the most effective safety feature available in vehicles today. Vehicles equipped with air bags are designed to work with seat belts and not act as replacements. In fact if air bags are deployed and a seat belt is not worn the occupant could be injured or even killed due to being thrown into the force of a rapidly opening frontal air bag.

It is also necessary to wear the seat belt properly. Place the shoulder belt across the middle of your chest and away from your neck. Adjust the lap belt across your hips below your stomach. The pelvis and rib cage are more able to withstand crash forces than other parts of your body. NEVER put the shoulder belt behind your back or under an arm.

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.