



## **PRESS RELEASE**

Contact: Lara Kohl  
lkohl@medstar911.org  
(682) 225-7113 (cell)  
(817) 632-0507 (office)

### **90 Days of Summer Safety: Seat Belts Save Lives**

**Aug. 10, 2009** (*Fort Worth, Texas*) If you're in the front seat during a crash, wearing a seat belt improves your chance of survival by 50 percent. Wearing a safety belt in a passenger vehicle increases the odds of surviving a serious crash by 50 percent. For those riding in pickup trucks, the odds get even better—chances for survival increase by 60 percent, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Wearing lap and shoulder belts (combined with air bags) is the most effective way to reduce fatalities and serious injuries in traffic collisions.

Texas law requires drivers and front seat passengers in all vehicles to be secured by a safety belt. Children under 17 years old must be secured with a safety belt or in a child safety seat, whether they are sitting in the front or back seat. A child under 5 years old and less than 36 inches tall must ride in a child safety seat.

A safety belt violation can result in fines ranging from \$25 to \$200, plus court costs. But not buckling up is even more costly if you're in a crash. According to the National Safety Council, lost wages, medical expenses, car repairs, taxes, increases in insurance premiums, travel delays and lost quality of life resulting from a crash add up to \$3.3 million per death and \$35,000 per injury. Of all passengers killed in traffic crashes in Texas in 2007, nearly half weren't buckled up.

#### **Tips:**

- Lap belts should fit snugly across your hips, not over your stomach.
- Shoulder belts go over your shoulder and across the center of your chest. Never adjust your seat so far back that the shoulder belt doesn't reach you—you could slip out from under it in a crash.
- Never tuck a shoulder belt behind your arm or behind your back.

#### **90 Days of Summer Safety**

MedStar EMS encourages the community to enjoy their summer activities safely through 90 Days of Summer Safety. Each week from June 15 through September 7 a new summer-themed safety topic will be highlighted with tips and information. Topics include firework safety, drunk driving awareness, and tips for avoiding heat stroke. Check [www.medstar911.org](http://www.medstar911.org) each week for the latest Summer Safety topic.

#### **About MedStar**

MedStar is the exclusive emergency and non-emergency ambulance service provider to 15 Tarrant County cities including Blue Mound, Burleson, Edgecliff Village, Forest Hill, Fort Worth, Haltom City, Haslet, Lakeside, Lake Worth, River Oaks, Saginaw, Sansom Park, Westover Hills, Westworth Village, and White Settlement. Established in 1986, MedStar provides advanced life support ambulance service to 421 square miles and

more than 860,000 residents in Tarrant County. MedStar responds to about 100,000 emergency calls a year with a fleet of 47 ambulances.

# # #