

Seatbelts are essential safety equipment

Key takeaways

- Wearing a seatbelt reduces risk of dying in a crash by up to 45%.
- Seatbelts are required to be worn by law and typically also by company policy.
- Regardless of trip distance and duration, seatbelts should be worn any time vehicles are being moved.

Putting the seatbelt on when entering a vehicle is an automatic response for most people. We get in, reach up to grab the belt, pull it across, and plug it in without ever really thinking about it. However, not everybody has developed this critical habit.

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, of the 37,133 Americans killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2017, 47% were not wearing seatbelts.

Wearing a seatbelt is required by law for a simple reason: It protects against serious injury and death. In fact, seatbelts are so effective, that according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, wearing them can reduce the risk of dying in a crash by up to 45%—and that doesn't even address the positive impact seatbelts have on major and minor injuries from crashes.

Whether your trip is a long-haul load to another time zone or a short drive to the other side of the worksite, wear your seatbelt any time your vehicle is being moved. And be sure your passengers do, too. Most accidents occur on two-lane roads within just a few miles from start/stop destinations.

Seatbelt use may not seem complicated, yet Oregon workplace fatalities are largely due to vehicle crashes. For your safety, take a few seconds to buckle up.

Take action (Complete one or more activities as a team)

- REVIEW AND FIT:** Review seatbelts in vehicles you normally operate to determine if they are in good working order and set up to the proper height to fit you. If not, take the vehicle to a dealer for repair and/or adjust height to fit you.
- DISCUSSION:** What does your company policy say about seatbelt use? Find, review, and discuss the policy.
- DRILL:** Practice the motion of putting on a seatbelt 10 times with both the left and right hand as if you're the passenger or driver of a vehicle. Practice saying to your passengers, "Please buckle up."
- ON/OFF THE JOB:** If you **don't have fleet vehicles**, discuss how many people teach their children or ask their passengers to wear a seatbelt when riding together. What barriers might prevent others from wearing their seatbelt?



