



May 11, 2009

OHSP Contact: Alyson Kechkaylo

517-333-5304

Mary Free Bed Contact: Meg Derrer

616-242-0474

MEDIA ADVISORY

SAFETY BELT ENFORCEMENT EFFORT AIMS TO REACH UNBUCKLED DRIVERS Crash victims share stories of survival, rehabilitation

What: Because the best way to prevent death or serious injury in a motor vehicle crash is to wear a seat belt, law enforcement officers have teamed with the Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital to kick off the May Buckle Up or Pay Up, Click it or Ticket mobilization.

Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital is the region's premier provider of inpatient and outpatient physical rehab services for children, adolescents and adults.

Hundreds of law enforcement agencies will launch a two-week statewide safety belt mobilization that runs May 18-31. Officers, deputies and troopers from 55 counties have planned nearly 700 seat belt enforcement zones throughout the mobilization.

When: 10 a.m., Thursday, May 14

Where: Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital, therapy gym (Please check in at reception desk)

235 Wealthy SE

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

Who: Chief Kevin Belk, Grand Rapids Police Department

Dr. Stephen Bloom, D.O., Rehabilitation and Physical Medicine Specialist, Mary Free Bed

Pat Besta, Ryan Grooter, Susan Riddle, Vicky Schmidt, former patients who were injured in crashes and

went through rehabilitation at Mary Free Bed

Why: While enforcement is key to reaching those who are not using seat belts, the goal of this event is to also raise awareness about the importance of seat belt use and the potentially devastating consequences that can occur if a motorist is involved in an unbelted crash.

Michigan has the highest safety belt use rate in the nation. This is vitally important because people who are belted when involved in a crash are 50 percent more likely to survive.

A listing of planned safety belt enforcement zone locations can be found on the OHSP Web site: www.michigan.gov/ohsp.