

## **NEW DRIVERS**

### **BUCKLE UP, IT'S THE LAW**

**KELLY MANNING:** Welcome to DMV Infocast, an audio production of the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles. This is Kelly Manning, Infocast Editor.

Today we are here with **Mary Santangelo**, the branch manager of the Enfield Branch DMV Office. We are going to talk today about an important issue on wearing your seatbelt.

**KELLY MANNING:** Mary, can you explain the seatbelt law in Connecticut?

**MARY SANTANGELO:** All drivers and front seat passengers must wear their seatbelts. All rear seat passengers ages 4 through 16 must wear their seatbelts.

**KELLY:** Why is it important that people wear their seatbelts in a vehicle?

**MARY:** Well, it could be the difference between life and death. Seatbelts do reduce the number of serious injuries by 50 percent. You're 25 times more likely to be killed or injured if you're thrown from a vehicle.

**KELLY:** We've all heard the phrase, "Click it or ticket." What are the consequences of not wearing a seatbelt?

**MARY:** Well, for not wearing your seatbelt in the vehicle, it's a \$37 fine. That means that each individual who is required to wear the seatbelt would be ticketed \$37, along with the driver, for each person that does not wear their seatbelt.

**KELLY:** If a student who was taking his or her driving test got into the vehicle for the road test and didn't buckle up, what would happen to the student?

**MARY:** Once they started driving, technically, by law, they have broken the law, and they would fail the driving test.

**KELLY:** If I didn't wear a seatbelt, what parts of the vehicle could injure me?

**MARY:** Well, many injuries or deaths occur when a person inside the car collides with either the steering wheel, the dashboard, the windshield, the frame, a door, a window, the roof, other passengers, or gets thrown out of the vehicle. Safety belts will stop what's called the human collision by holding you in place. And internal collision occurs when the organs and bone structure of your body is altered due to a crash.

**KELLY:** What injuries can occur when not wearing your seatbelt?

**MARY:** There's many injuries that could occur. Anything from a broken bone to facial injuries, to internal injuries, bruises, bumps. When you're thrown from the vehicle, you can also be thrown into the path of your own car if it didn't stop. It could roll over you. You could be thrown in the path of other traffic. You could hit a guardrail, telephone pole or any other object that's there, which would basically result in a major fatality.

**KELLY:** Are there any other benefits of wearing a seatbelt?

**MARY:** Yes. A seatbelt will stop you from moving after the car has stopped so the force of the collision is lessened. It would also help spread the force of the collision over the strongest parts of your body, which would be your hip and your shoulders.

**KELLY:** Can you explain the child safety seat laws and requirements and tell us the difference between the regulations for infants and children?

**MARY:** Yes. Children must ride in a proper child restraint until they are over 6 years of age and 60 pounds. Both the weight and age requirement must be met. After children have outgrown the car seat, they must ride in the booster seat using a lap and shoulder belt. The law now also requires that infants remain in a rear facing seat until they are one year old and 20 pounds. If you are

found in violation of this, you will be required to attend a car seat educational class.

**KELLY:** Do you have any advice for new drivers getting their license for the first time?

**MARY:** Well, I feel that everyone should buckle up when they get into the car. It's very important for young people to get into the habit of putting on their seatbelt when they get into the car before they start to drive. You never know when an accident can occur, and we would like everyone to be as safe as possible.

**KELLY:** Well, thank you very much, Mary, for being with us here today. Young drivers need to remember to buckle up every time they get into the vehicle, not only because it's the law, but because it can save your life one day.

**KELLY MANNING:** This has been an Infocast produced by the State of Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles. Thank you for listening.