



## A Campaign on Safer Driving With Information

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When it comes to wearing seat belts, Texans exceed the national average.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports 94% of the state's drivers and front seat passengers wear seat belts. That compares with an 86% rate nationwide.

When it comes to motor vehicle occupant deaths, Texans also exceed the national average. The CDC says 25,017 were killed in a 10-year period from 2003-2012. The rate of deaths in all age ranges involving motor vehicle incidents was [30% higher in Texas](#) than elsewhere across the country.

One possible explanation: [Adults who live in rural areas](#) are 10% less likely to wear seat belts (78% use) than adults who live in urban and suburban areas (87% use), according to the CDC. Everyone knows Texas has vast expanses of wide open spaces, much of it managed by cattle ranchers or worked by oilmen.

In 2014, the Texas Department of Transportation reported [fatalities in traffic incidents in rural areas](#) of the state accounted for 55.86% of the state's traffic deaths. There were 1,974 people killed in rural traffic incidents.

TxDOT reported of all persons killed in vehicles where restraint usage was applicable and restraint use was known, [43.8% were reported as not restrained](#) when the fatal crash occurred.

What often is overlooked in rural areas: The CDC says seat belt usage reduces serious motor vehicle injuries and deaths by about half. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration says [adults are provided the greatest protection when air bags are used in combination with seat belts](#).

In Texas, [seat belt laws](#) are primary. Officers can pull a vehicle over and issue a ticket just because a driver or passenger covered by the law is not wearing a seat belt. This differs from secondary enforcement law, which only allows an officer to issue a ticket for someone not wearing a seat belt if the driver has been pulled over from some other offense.