

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Driver Awareness Surveys in Maine, July 2013

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Trumbull, Connecticut

Introduction

Maine is one of 22 States to have upgraded their seat belt law to primary enforcement since 1997. As of July 2012, 32 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico had primary enforcement laws. A primary seat belt law allows law enforcement to issue a belt citation upon observation of a seat belt violation alone. With secondary seat belt laws, police must first observe another violation (e.g. speeding) before being able to issue a seat belt citation.

The primary belt law in Maine went into effect September 20, 2007, with an educational grace period to April 1, 2008. In 2008, NHTSA conducted a three-part evaluation of the implementation and effects of the new primary belt law (Chaudhary, Tison, and Casanova, 2010). In 2009, 2010, and 2011, an additional survey of driver knowledge was conducted (Leaf and Chaudhary, 2009; Leaf and Chaudhary, 2010; Leaf and Chaudhary, 2011). Because the driver knowledge measurement described in this report is a continuation of the work reported previously, this document quotes liberally from those reports.

Primary laws have been associated with a higher percentage of observed seat belt use (e.g. Ulmer et al., 1995). In 2008, States with primary laws had an average observed seat belt usage rate about nine percentage points higher than those with secondary laws (based on NHTSA, 2009).

Seat belt use saves lives. It is estimated that nearly half of passenger vehicle fatalities involving unbelted occupants would be prevented if they had been properly restrained. In practice, changes from secondary to primary belt laws have led, along with greater belt use, to fewer traffic fatalities. For example, in late 1999 and early 2000, Alabama, Michigan, and New Jersey changed their laws from secondary to primary. Chaudhary (in review) reported that these laws increased seat belt use among fatally injured front seat occupants of motor vehicles and also decreased the number of fatalities.

Similar effects were seen with other States as they passed belt use laws – belt use increased but fatalities did not drop as much as expected. One explanation was that the drivers who were buckling up were drivers who were already relatively safe drivers and the risky drivers, more likely to be involved in a crash, remained unrestrained. Therefore, those most in need of seat belts were least likely to buckle up. Preusser, Williams, and Lund (1986) showed support for this contention. During this study, researchers observed roadways near bars and taverns in New York State several months after the New York State seat belt law went into effect. Seat belt observations occurring on roadways near taverns showed that 43 percent of drivers during the day were belted but that observed belt use dropped to 36 percent at night, at the same location. Furthermore, drivers most likely to be drinking (and therefore constituted a higher risk) had even lower belt use. Indeed, drivers arriving or leaving bar parking lots at night had a 24 percent belt use rate.

One of the key features, of course, of a primary belt law is that the general public is aware of the law and perceives a high probability of being stopped and ticketed for not being restrained. Chaudhary et al. (2010) conducted three waves of surveys of drivers at Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) offices. They showed that the public was aware of the main feature of the primary belt law, i.e., that they can be stopped and ticketed simply for not wearing their seat

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belts. Similarly, respondent reported chances of getting a ticket remained relatively high in June 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 (Leaf and Chaudhary, 2009; Leaf and Chaudhary, 2010; Leaf and Chaudhary, 2011; Leaf and Chaudhary, 2012).

The current report repeats the Chaudhary et al. (2010) methodology to examine the evolution of driver knowledge and attitudes a year after they were last assessed, six years after Maine's primary belt law began to be enforced. Some results from the earlier reports are included here for perspective. The survey used in this iteration, as the one used 2010 to 2012, was modified to extend driver knowledge measurement to the topics of drinking and driving, speeding, and cell phone use.

Method

Surveys were conducted in eight Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV) offices across the state of Maine: Augusta, Bangor, Ellsworth, Kennebunk, Mexico, Portland, Rockland, and South Portland. These offices were selected to provide a representative sampling of Maine drivers. Surveys were conducted from July 22, 2013 to July 31, 2013 about six weeks after the Nationwide *Click It or Ticket* campaign, which was conducted around the Memorial Day holiday.

The methods were identical to those in Chaudhary et al. (2010). Each individual completing a survey was required to be a licensed driver in the state of Maine. Individuals were approached while they were waiting to be called to a station and asked if they held a valid Maine license. Once qualified, individuals were asked to complete the anonymous survey. The survey consisted of 17 questions on one side of a single sheet of paper (see Appendix A).

Surveys prior to 2010 contained questions regarding primary seat belt law only which had recently went into effect. The last three surveys, including the current survey, began with driver background questions: age, sex, home zip code, driving frequency and primary vehicle type. In addition questions pertaining to impaired driving, speeding and cell phone use were added:

- 4 questions on seat belt use, enforcement, and enforcement publicity;
- 3 questions on drinking and driving and enforcement;
- 3 questions on speeding and enforcement; and
- 2 questions on cell phone use.

The scope of the current survey reflected major topics of emphasis within the Maine highway safety office.

Results

Demographics

A total of 1,737 driver surveys were completed across the eight BMV offices. Half (50 percent) of drivers were male, and the other half female. Two percent were under 18 years of age; 12 percent were 18-25; 13 percent were 26-34; 25 percent were 35-49; 22 percent were 50-59; and 25 percent were age 60 or older. Seventeen percent drove less than 5000 miles/year; 30 percent drove 5000-10,000 miles/year; 30 percent drove 10,001-15,000 miles/year; and 24 percent drove

more than 15,000 miles/year. Fifty percent drove passenger cars; 19 percent drove pickup trucks; 19 percent drove SUVs; six percent drove minivans; six percent drove full-size vans; and 5 percent drove other or multiple kinds of vehicles. These numbers are very similar to those in the 2011 and 2012 survey samples.

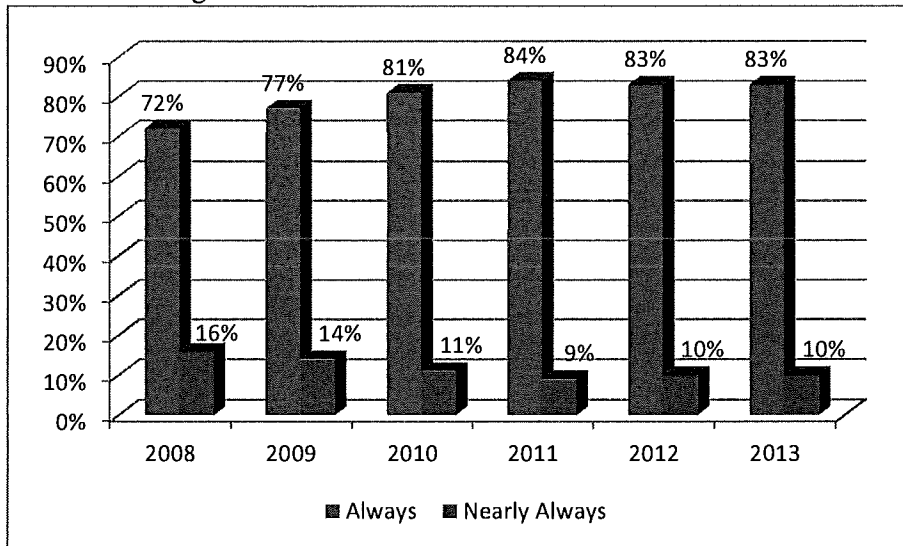
Reported Belt Use

Self-reported belt use increased steadily from the three measurements in 2008 to July 2011 and is nearly unchanged from 2011 to 2013. The distribution of 2011-2013 belt use self-reports is given in Table 1; comparative values for the highest usage categories over the last six waves (always and nearly always) are shown in Figure 1. Note that actual belt use measured at 120 sites statewide was nearly constant at 81 percent in June 2008 and June 2009, 82 percent in June 2010 and June 2011, 84% in June 2012 and 83% in June 2013.

Table 1. Driver Reports: How Often They Use Seat Belts

How often wear belts?	July 2011		July 2012		July 2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Always	1,395	84.1%	1,329	83.0%	1447	83.4%
Nearly always	149	9.0%	160	10.0%	181	10.4%
Sometimes	72	4.3%	73	4.6%	66	3.8%
Seldom	26	1.6%	19	1.2%	23	1.3%
Never	16	1.0%	20	1.2%	18	1.0%
TOTAL N	1,658		1,601		1,735	

Figure 1. How Often Do You Use Seat Belts?



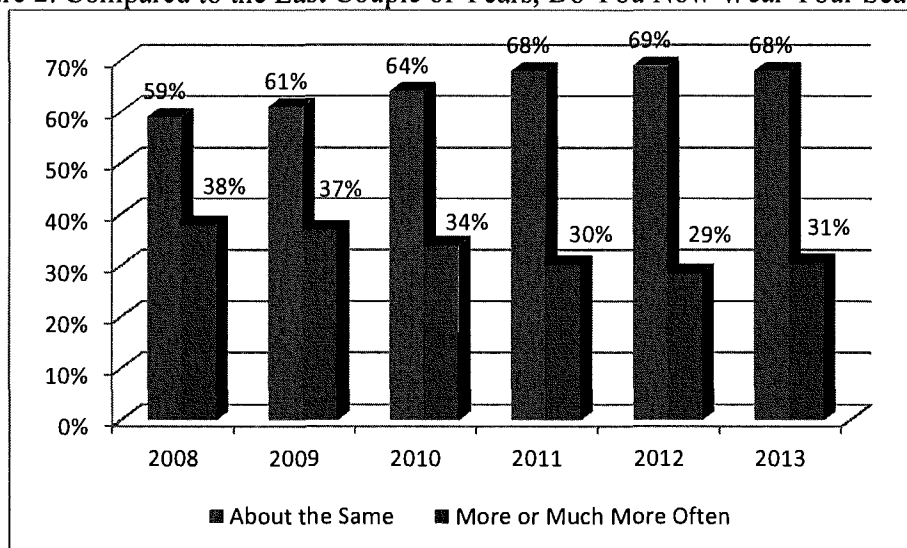
Drivers were asked how their current seat belt use compared to their belt use in recent years. Results for 2011-2013 are shown in Table 2 and, along with the preceding five waves, in Figure 2. The percent of drivers indicating that their belt use was unchanged increased to 64 percent in

2010, 68 percent in 2011, and 68-69 percent in 2012 and 2013. These increases were nearly matched by decreases in the “more often” and “much more” responses, about 38 percent combined for 2008 and 2009, 34 percent in 2010, and 29-31 percent in 2011, 2012 and 2013. The consistency of these reports is independent of actual belt use, which rose about seven percent over the three waves in 2008 before stabilizing in June 2008 through June 2011 and rising again in June 2012, followed by a slight drop in 2013. About one-fourth to one-third of drivers report increased belt use even though the overall belt use numbers are quite steady.

Table 2. Driver Reports: Belt Use Compared To “Last Couple of Years”

How often wear belts?	July 2011		July 2012		July 2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Much less often	19	1.2%	14	0.9%	8	0.5%
Less often	6	0.4%	18	1.1%	10	0.6%
About the same	1,109	68.3%	1,093	69.4%	1167	68.4%
More often	176	10.8%	177	11.2%	191	11.2%
Much more often	313	19.3%	274	17.4%	331	19.4%
TOTAL N	1,623		1,576		1,707	

Figure 2. Compared to the Last Couple of Years, Do You Now Wear Your Seat Belt?



Drivers also rated what they thought their chances were of getting a seat belt ticket if they drove without wearing their seat belt. More than one-third (40.3 percent) felt that they would be ticketed “always” or “nearly always” if they were not properly buckled up. This is higher than 2011 and 2012 but down significantly from June 2008 and June 2009, when 46 percent and 47 percent, respectively, of drivers thought so. Fewer drivers thought they would be ticketed “sometimes” in 2012 and 2013 (40 percent) compared to 2011 (44 percent). There is a slight decrease in the number of drivers reporting their chances as being “seldom” (14.3 percent compared to 16-17 percent for 2011-12), with slightly more indicating “never” (up to 5.8 percent from 5.0 and 5.2 respectively from 2011 and 2012).

Table 3. Driver Reports: Chances of Getting a Ticket If Driving Unbelted

Chances of getting a ticket?	July 2011		July 2012		July 2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Always	312	19.0%	360	22.7%	415	24.1%
Nearly always	248	15.1%	257	16.2%	278	16.2%
Sometimes	726	44.1%	630	39.7%	682	39.7%
Seldom	277	16.8%	256	16.1%	245	14.3%
Never	83	5.0%	83	5.2%	99	5.8%
TOTAL N	1,646		1,586		1,719	

Awareness of Enforcement and Media Seat Belt Efforts

The next survey questions asked drivers what they had seen or heard recently about using seat belts. Note that these surveys were administered about six weeks after the annual CIOT program, which emphasizes media messages and highly visible enforcement. The first question asked, “In the past 60 days, have you seen or heard about extra enforcement where police were looking at seat belt use?” About 56 percent of respondents reported hearing about belt use enforcement in 2013. In 2012, 58 percent said they had, compared with just 53 percent in 2011.

Those who had indicated a general awareness were asked to check where they had seen or heard something and what message theme(s) they recalled. The results are summarized in Tables 4 and 5 below. 2011 and 2012 values are also presented for comparison.

Television was the most cited medium, by 32 percent of all respondents, followed by radio (18 percent), newspaper (12 percent), police checkpoints (5 percent), posters (3 percent), and web sites (2 percent). “Other” medium was selected by 8 percent of the respondents, nearly all of them explaining they heard about it from someone else (e.g., friend, people, or word of mouth).

Table 4. Where Did They See or Hear About Extra Seat Belt Enforcement

(Where see/hear about seat belts *	July 2011		July 2012		July 2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Newspaper	182	11.0%	174	10.9%	202	11.6%
Radio	295	17.9%	325	20.3%	320	18.4%
Television	435	26.3%	558	34.8%	551	31.7%
Poster	59	3.6%	49	3.1%	51	2.9%
Web site	24	1.5%	27	1.7%	26	1.5%
Police checkpoint	99	6.0%	83	5.2%	88	5.1%
Other	124	7.5%	130	8.1%	140	8.0%
TOTAL N RESPONDENTS	1,661		1,602		1,737	

* Respondents could check more than one; percents do not need to add to 100%.

The most mentioned theme of the messages, by 43 percent of the respondents, was *Click It or Ticket*, which was the national theme that had been emphasized around Memorial Day. Seventeen percent identified *Buckle Up. No Excuses!* as the theme they had heard. Smaller numbers recognized *Drunk driving. Over the limit. Under arrest.* (5 percent) and *Survive your*

drive (5 percent). Four percent checked “other”, but no more than one or two respondents mentioned any specific theme.

Table 5. If Yes, What Did It Say?

What did the messages say?	July 2011		July 2012		July 2013	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Click it or ticket	642	38.9%	739	46.1%	739	42.5%
Drunk driving. Over the limit. Under arrest	114	6.9%	67	4.2%	79	4.5%
Buckle up. No excuses!	276	16.7%	279	17.4%	299	17.2%
Survive your drive	52	3.1%	71	4.4%	80	4.6%
Other	63	3.8%	46	2.9%	67	3.9%
TOTAL N RESPONDENTS	1,652		1,602		1,737	

Self-Reported Belt Use and Other Factors

The surveys provide the opportunity to examine belt use, as reported by the respondents, as related to demographic characteristics and other factors in the surveys. These are the subjects of Tables 6 and 7.

Male respondents reported lower belt use than female respondents, consistent with belt use observations. Drivers ages 18-25 reported lowest belt use, followed by drivers ages 26-34. The highest belt use was reported by drivers 50-59, followed by those who were 60 and older, under 18, and 35-49. Drivers of pickup trucks are less likely to report buckling up than drivers of other vehicle types, consistent with results seen in actual belt use observation studies.

Drivers who report buckling up “more often” are, oddly enough, least likely to report buckling up. The few drivers who report using their seat belts less or much less than recently are very unlikely to report buckling up compared to others. Drivers who report “about the same” or “much more often” are most likely to buckle up.

There are no significant differences in reported seat belt use between different miles driven categories. Drivers in the Kennebunk BMV office were most likely to report always buckling up, and drivers in the Ellsworth office least likely.

Table 6. Demographics and Self-Reported Belt Use

Factor	N	Self-Reported Seat Belt Use (%)				
		Always	Nearly Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Total	1723	83.3%	10.4%	3.8%	1.3%	1.0%
Sex***						
Male	862	76.2%	14.8%	5.1%	2.0%	1.9%
Female	861	90.5%	6.0%	2.6%	0.7%	0.2%
Age***						
Under 18	41	87.8%	2.4%	7.3%	0.0%	2.4%
18-25	205	70.7%	13.7%	10.7%	2.9%	2.0%
26-34	229	75.5%	17.0%	4.8%	1.3%	1.3%
35-49	439	82.7%	11.4%	3.2%	2.1%	0.7%
50-59	378	89.4%	7.7%	1.6%	0.5%	0.8%
60+	439	88.6%	7.7%	2.3%	0.5%	0.9%
Miles driven, last year						
Less than 5000	285	89.5%	6.7%	2.5%	0.7%	0.7%
5000-10000	523	83.7%	9.6%	4.6%	1.3%	0.8%
10001-15000	511	82.8%	10.6%	3.7%	1.8%	1.2%
15000+	407	79.1%	14.3%	3.9%	1.2%	1.5%
Vehicle driven most often***						
Passenger car	871	86.7%	8.2%	3.1%	1.4%	0.7%
Pickup truck	322	71.4%	16.5%	7.1%	2.5%	2.5%
SUV	322	87.9%	9.9%	1.2%	0.3%	0.6%
Minivan	106	91.5%	6.6%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Full-sized van	27	74.1%	18.5%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	34	76.5%	2.9%	11.8%	2.9%	5.9%
How often use belt now vs recent years***						
Much less often	8	50.0%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	37.5%
Less often	10	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%
About the same	1167	90.0%	5.0%	2.6%	1.5%	0.9%
More often	191	44.0%	39.8%	13.6%	2.1%	0.5%
Much more often	330	85.5%	13.0%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
BMV Office**						
Augusta	260	84.2%	8.5%	5.0%	1.9%	0.4%
Bangor	264	83.3%	8.7%	6.1%	1.1%	0.8%
Ellsworth	204	74.0%	15.7%	5.4%	2.0%	2.9%
Kennebunk	204	91.7%	4.9%	2.0%	1.0%	0.5%
Mexico	183	82.5%	12.0%	2.7%	2.2%	0.5%
Portland	199	84.4%	11.6%	2.5%	0.0%	1.5%
Rockland	210	82.9%	12.9%	3.3%	0.5%	0.5%
South Portland	211	83.9%	10.4%	2.4%	1.9%	1.4%

** p < .05; *** p < .001

Drivers who think the chances of being ticketed if unbelted are “always” or “never” are more likely to report always wearing their belts, followed by drivers who believe the chance of being ticketed is “nearly always” or “sometimes”. Drivers believing there is “seldom” a chance of being ticketed are least likely to report “always” using their belts. Drivers believing there is “never” a chance of being ticketed are most likely to report “never” wearing their belts.

People aware of extra seat belt enforcement within the 60 days before the survey or who recognized Click It or Ticket were somewhat less likely to report always using their seat belts and somewhat more likely to report the lower levels of belt use.

Table 7. Awareness of Seat Belt Campaigns and Self-Reported Belt Use

Factor	N	Self-Reported Seat Belt Use (%)				
		Always	Nearly Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Chances of getting ticket if unbelted***						
Always	414	94.4%	3.6%	0.7%	0.5%	0.7%
Nearly Always	278	81.3%	14.0%	3.2%	1.1%	0.4%
Sometimes	682	79.8%	12.9%	5.3%	1.9%	0.1%
Seldom	244	75.4%	13.5%	6.1%	1.6%	3.3%
Never	99	87.9%	4.0%	3.0%	0.0%	5.1%
Past 60 days, seen/heard about extra seat belt enforcement***						
Yes	962	79.7%	13.0%	4.4%	1.7%	1.2%
No	773	88.0%	7.2%	3.1%	0.9%	0.8%
Recognized Click It or Ticket**						
Yes	737	80.3%	13.0%	4.5%	1.2%	0.9%
No	998	85.7%	8.5%	3.3%	1.4%	1.1%

** p < .05; *** p < .001

Drinking and Driving

Three questions addressed the issue of drinking and driving. The first asked how often within the last 60 days the respondent had driven within two hours after drinking alcoholic beverages. Nearly seven out of eight respondents (87.3 percent) report never doing so. Another 6.4 percent report drinking and driving once or twice, and 6.4 percent report doing so three or more times.

The results are summarized in Table 8 below. Female respondents are more likely than male respondents to report never drive after drinking (90 percent vs. 84 percent). Only one driver less than 18 (out of 40) reports driving after drinking. Drivers 18-25 are most likely to report driving after drinking, followed by those 26-34; drivers 60 and over were least likely to drive after drinking. Also, drivers who report always wearing seat belts are more likely to never drive after drinking (89 percent) than drivers who report less belt use (78 percent). Drivers who report driving the least (< 5000 miles/year) more often never drove after drinking (95 percent) than drivers who drove more miles (85-87 percent). People from the Rockland and Portland offices were least likely to report never driving after drinking (77% and 80% respectively), with the remaining offices ranging from 87.9% to 91.2%). There were no differences in reported driving after drinking by type of vehicle driven (not shown).

Table 8. Self-Reported Driving Within Two Hours After Drinking In The Last 60 Days

Factor	Total N	Frequency, drive after drinking in 60 days (%)		
		Never	1-2 times	3+ times
Total	1668	87.3%	6.4%	6.4%
Sex***				
Male	831	84.4%	6.9%	8.8%
Female	837	90.2%	5.9%	3.9%
Age**				
Under 18	40	97.5%	2.5%	0.0%
18-25	199	82.9%	7.5%	9.5%
26-34	223	85.2%	5.8%	9.0%
35-49	425	85.9%	7.1%	7.1%
50-59	371	87.9%	8.1%	4.0%
60+	418	90.4%	4.3%	5.3%
Miles driven last year***				
Less than 5000	276	95.3%	4.0%	0.7%
5000-10000	504	86.7%	6.0%	7.3%
10001-15000	496	85.5%	7.9%	6.7%
15000+	396	84.8%	6.6%	8.6%
Self-Reported Seat Belt Use***				
Always	1396	89.3%	5.4%	5.3%
All other	283	77.7%	11.0%	11.3%
BMV Office***				
Augusta	251	91.2%	5.6%	3.2%
Bangor	253	90.9%	3.6%	5.5%
Ellsworth	199	88.4%	7.0%	4.5%
Kennebunk	199	87.9%	4.5%	7.5%
Mexico	177	90.4%	4.5%	5.1%
Portland	193	80.3%	10.4%	9.3%
Rockland	204	77.0%	11.3%	11.8%
South Portland	204	90.7%	4.9%	4.4%

** p < .05; *** p < .001

Overall, 48 percent of respondents felt that the likelihood of being arrested if driving impaired was “always” or “nearly always”. Another 47 percent felt they would be arrested “sometimes”. Few thought impaired drivers had very low chances of being apprehended; just 5 percent answered “seldom”, 1 percent “never”. Details are given in Table 9.

Nearly three in four drivers (70 percent) report seeing or hearing about impaired driving enforcement within the last 60 days. Those drivers felt the likelihood of arrest for impaired driving was slightly higher than did the drivers who had not seen recent enforcement messages.

Female respondents felt the odds of arrest for impaired driving were higher than did male respondents, and young drivers felt the odds were higher than did older drivers. Those with higher self-reported levels of seat belt use felt the likelihood of arrest for impaired driving was higher. There were no differences by miles driven or vehicle type (all not shown).

Table 9. Awareness of Impaired Driving Enforcement and Perceived Likelihood of Arrest

Factor	Total N	Perceived likelihood of arrest if driving impaired (%)				
		Always	Nearly always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Total	1718	21.9%	25.7%	47.3%	4.5%	0.6%
Past 60 days, seen/heard about extra seat belt enforcement***						
Yes	1209	23.6%	27.0%	45.7%	3.5%	0.2%
No	509	17.9%	22.6%	51.3%	6.9%	1.4%

*** p < .001

Speeding

Overall, nearly 8 in 9 drivers (87%) admitted driving more than 35 mph on roads with a 30 mph speed limit at least occasionally. Two percent said they did it “always”, and 8 percent said they did it “nearly always”. Most (44 percent and 32 percent respectively) reported “sometimes” or “seldom”. Just 13 percent said they “never” did so.

Male respondents admitted going over 35 mph more than female respondents. Drivers ages 18-25 were most likely to speed, followed by drivers under 18 and drivers 26-34. Drivers age 60 and older were least likely to speed. Drivers who drove less than 5000 miles/year were most likely to report speeding “seldom” or “never” while those who drove more than 15,000 were most likely to report speeding always or nearly always. SUV drivers were most likely to report speeding always or nearly always and pickup drivers were least likely to report speeding seldom or never. Drivers who always used their seat belts were less likely to speed than other drivers. The details are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Self-Reported Driving More Than 5 Mph Over 30 Mph Speed Limit

Factor	Total N	How often drive over 35mph in 30 mph zone (%)				
		Always	Nearly Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Total	1716	2.3%	8.3%	44.5%	31.9%	13.1%
Sex**						
Male	860	2.6%	9.8%	45.5%	29.1%	13.1%
Female	856	2.0%	6.8%	43.5%	34.8%	13.0%
Age***						
Under 18	41	9.8%	7.3%	46.3%	17.1%	19.5%
18-25	205	4.4%	13.2%	48.8%	26.3%	7.3%
26-34	228	1.8%	11.4%	46.9%	27.6%	12.3%
35-49	436	2.1%	8.3%	40.6%	36.5%	12.6%
50-59	376	2.4%	7.4%	43.6%	35.4%	11.2%
60+	438	0.9%	5.0%	45.4%	30.6%	18.0%
Miles driven, last year***						
Less than 5000	285	2.1%	4.9%	39.3%	28.8%	24.9%
5000-10000	520	1.7%	6.2%	44.0%	33.5%	14.6%
10001-15000	508	1.8%	8.1%	46.1%	35.4%	8.7%
15000+	406	3.4%	13.5%	46.3%	27.6%	9.1%
Vehicle driven most often**						
Passenger car	868	2.5%	7.5%	43.1%	31.9%	15.0%
Pickup truck	322	2.2%	8.4%	50.9%	26.7%	11.8%
SUV	321	1.6%	10.3%	45.2%	34.9%	8.1%
Minivan	104	1.0%	5.8%	35.6%	37.5%	20.2%
Full-sized van	26	0.0%	7.7%	42.3%	38.5%	11.5%
Other	34	5.9%	14.7%	35.3%	23.5%	20.6%
Self-Reported Seat Belt Use***						
Always	1440	1.7%	6.8%	43.4%	33.3%	14.8%
Not Always	287	5.2%	15.3%	49.1%	24.7%	5.6%

** p < .05; *** p < .001

Drivers were very ready to believe speeding results in tickets. For driving over the speed limit, 11 percent of drivers reported believing the offense would “always” result in a ticket, and another 21 percent felt it would “nearly always” produce a ticket. Just 1 percent felt it would “never” result in a ticket.

Drivers who more often drive over the speed limit were less likely to believe such behavior results in tickets; drivers who report never driving over the speed limit were most likely to believe it would “always” result in a ticket.

About half of all drivers (53 percent) reported seeing or hearing about heightened police enforcement of speeding laws. They were much more likely to also report high likelihood of being ticketed for exceeding the speed limit. Details are show in Table 11.

Table 11. Awareness of Speeding Enforcement and Perceived Likelihood of Arrest

Factor	N	Chances of getting ticket if drive over speed limit (%)				
		Always	Nearly Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Total	1728	11.0%	21.2%	58.8%	8.2%	0.8%
How often drive over 35 in 30 mph zone***						
Always	39	15.4%	10.3%	35.9%	33.3%	5.1%
Nearly always	142	6.3%	17.6%	62.0%	14.1%	0.0%
Sometimes	765	5.6%	19.0%	67.1%	8.0%	0.4%
Seldom	551	9.6%	26.7%	57.2%	6.5%	0.0%
Never	228	34.2%	19.7%	37.3%	5.3%	3.5%
Past 60 days, seen/heard about extra speeding enforcement***						
Yes	912	14.6%	25.3%	54.3%	5.2%	0.7%
No	812	6.9%	16.7%	63.9%	11.7%	0.7%

*** p < .001

Hand-held cell phone calling and texting

The use of hand-held cell phones for calling and for texting is under intense scrutiny at the present time. Cell phone use has been shown to be roughly equivalent to alcohol-impaired driving in increased crash involvement, and texting involves more extreme distraction.

Though both are demonstrably risky behaviors, they are popular activities for Maine drivers, though small improvements are becoming evident. The percent of drivers indicating they never use hand held cell phones while driving has increased from 27.7% in 2011, to 28.7% in 2012 and now 31.7% in 2013. Texting while driving has also decreased from 2011 to 2013 but by a much smaller margin, from a low of 72.4% of drivers saying they never text while driving to 73.6% of drivers in 2013. The full distributions of responses from 2011 to 2013 are shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Driver Reports: Hand-Held Cell Phone Calling and Texting While Driving

	Use hand-held cell phone			Text while driving		
	July 2011	July 2012	July 2013	July 2011	July 2012	July 2013
Always	1.7%	2.2%	1.3%	1.3%	0.7%	0.3%
Nearly always	5.3%	4.1%	3.7%	1.9%	1.0%	1.3%
Sometimes	33.8%	33.8%	32.9%	9.1%	9.7%	8.1%
Seldom	31.5%	31.2%	30.4%	15.4%	15.3%	16.7%
Never	27.7%	28.7%	31.7%	72.4%	73.3%	73.6%
TOTAL N	1,652	1,594	1,737	1,652	1,594	1,737

Drivers who text while driving tend to be the same ones who make and receive hand-held cell phone calls while driving. Of those who “always” or “nearly always” make hand-held cell calls, 71% admit to any texting, and 23% admit to texting “always” or “nearly always”. Ninety-eight percent of those who “never” make hand-held cell phone calls also “never” text.

As shown in Table 13, there was no difference in hand-held cell phone use by sex. With the exception of under-18 drivers, hand-held cell phone use was greatest for drivers ages 18-25 and dropped off with increasing age. Under-18 drivers “always” or “nearly always” used hand-held cell phones as much as anyone but also had very high rates of “never” using the devices. Hand-held cell phone use was least for drivers with less than 5000 miles driven last year and increased with mileage; it’s important to emphasize that the measure is of the rate of phone use, not the total number of calls. Like 2011, full-size van drivers were more likely to use cell phones, followed by pickup truck drivers and drivers of other vehicles. Drivers who always wore seat belts used hand-held cell phones much less than drivers who used their seat belts less often.

Table 13. Self-Reported Talking on Hand-Held Cell Phone When Driving

Factor	Total N	How often talk on hand-held cell phone when driving (%)				
		Always	Nearly Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Total	1718	1.3%	3.7%	33.1%	30.6%	31.4%
Sex						
Male	860	1.9%	3.7%	31.9%	30.0%	32.6%
Female	858	0.8%	3.5%	34.3%	31.1%	30.3%
Age***						
Under 18	41	2.4%	7.3%	19.5%	22.0%	48.8%
18-25	204	2.9%	6.9%	45.1%	27.0%	18.1%
26-34	227	2.2%	6.2%	47.6%	28.2%	15.9%
35-49	438	1.8%	3.9%	42.0%	32.4%	19.9%
50-59	378	0.8%	4.2%	31.2%	33.6%	30.2%
60+	438	0.0%	0.0%	13.5%	29.5%	57.1%
Miles driven, last year***						
Less than 5000	283	0.4%	2.1%	18.4%	22.6%	58.5%
5000-10000	522	0.4%	2.5%	30.1%	30.1%	37.0%
10001-15000	510	2.0%	3.9%	36.9%	34.5%	22.7%
15000+	406	2.5%	5.9%	41.6%	31.3%	18.7%
Vehicle driven most often**						
Passenger car	869	0.8%	3.6%	30.5%	31.3%	33.8%
Pickup truck	322	1.9%	5.0%	34.5%	27.6%	31.1%
SUV	322	2.2%	2.2%	38.2%	33.2%	24.2%
Minivan	105	1.0%	2.9%	29.5%	24.8%	41.9%
Full-sized van	27	0.0%	7.4%	33.3%	33.3%	25.9%
Other	32	0.0%	6.3%	43.8%	9.4%	40.6%
Self-Reported Seat Belt Use***						
Always	1440	0.9%	3.1%	29.7%	31.5%	34.8%
Not Always	289	3.5%	6.6%	48.8%	24.9%	16.3%

** p < .05 *** p < .001

Patterns were similar for texting, though at lower levels of activity than hand-held cell phone use (not shown). Texting did not vary by sex or by type of vehicle. Drivers under 18 texted at levels that would fall in between those for drivers 18-25 and 26-34. For all remaining age categories texting gradually decreased with age. Drivers reporting miles driven as 10,000 to 15,001 miles

had the highest rate of texting (2.6%), more than twice that of the other miles driven categories. Finally, texting increased as belt usage decreased.

Discussion

In eight Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles offices in July 2013, 1,737 drivers with valid Maine driver's licenses completed one-page surveys. Respondent demographics were very similar to those from the 2011 and 2012 survey samples. Drivers were surveyed about their knowledge of recent campaigns to increase awareness and compliance as well as their own attitudes and belt use. They were also surveyed about drinking and driving, speeding, and texting and calling using hand-held cell phones.

This survey is an extension of seven earlier surveys. The first four looked exclusively at seat belt laws, campaigns, and use. Surveys in 2010, 2011 and 2012 had expanded scope identical to the current survey. Two surveys were conducted in 2008 just before and after April 1, 2008, which was the time that Maine's primary seat belt law first began to be enforced. The third of those surveys was done in early June 2008, after the national CIOT enforcement and media campaign, and the fourth was done in early June 2009, also just after the CIOT emphasis. The fifth survey was done in early July 2010, about 6 weeks after CIOT, as were the surveys in 2011, 2012 and the current survey in 2013.

Overall seat belt use in passenger vehicles, as measured by Maine in NHTSA-approved observation designs, was nearly unchanged over the first three years: 83.0 percent in 2008, 82.6 percent in 2009, 82.0 percent in 2010, and 81.6 percent in 2011. With a new survey design, observed belt use rose to 84.4 percent in 2012. In 2013, observed belt use was 83 percent.

Most drivers reported high personal use of seat belts (83 percent "always" and 10 percent "nearly always"), consistent with actual statewide use. Although actual statewide belt use was nearly stable since 2008, drivers regularly reported using their seatbelts more than the year before: for the first five waves (three in 2008, one in 2009, and one in 2010), about 61 percent of drivers reported "about the same" belt use as in the preceding year, about 16 percent reported "more often", and about 20 percent reported "much more often." There are fairly consistent responses for 2011-2013. In 2011 and in 2013, the figures were 68 percent, 11 percent, and 19 percent, respectively. In 2012, figures were slightly different but very similar at 69 percent, 11 percent, and 17 percent, respectively.

Nearly half of the drivers in 2012 (46 percent) were aware of the CIOT campaign completed several weeks before the surveys were administered, up from 39 percent in 2011. This year, 43 percent of drivers were aware of the campaign. Also this year, 17 percent (the same as in 2012) recognized the *Buckle Up. No Excuses!* campaign that was used in 2007 and 2008 to publicize the new primary law but not more recently.

Differences in reported seat belt use reinforced observed belt use differences and offered interesting additional patterns. By their own reports, male drivers buckle up less, as do drivers ages 18-34, and pickup drivers.. Interestingly, those drivers indicating the highest and lowest perceived chances of getting a ticket report the highest belt use. Awareness of seat belt

enforcement efforts and the CIOT campaign, were both reliable predictors of slightly lower belt use this year, contrary to the results for 2012.

The current survey repeated the broader focus of the 2010 through 2012 surveys by looking at impaired driving, speeding, and cell phone use. Very few drivers report driving within two hours after drinking alcohol, though males and younger drivers more often did this. It should be noted that this behavior, as described, is not illegal. While driving with any alcohol in one's system increases crash risk, a single drink one to two hours before driving is likely to produce a BAC of 0.02 g/dl or less, well below the legal per se limit (.08). Questions which tap into the frequency of legally impaired driving, opinions about it, and expectations of the risk of arrest, could be a useful extension of these more general questions. Self-reported use of hand-held cell phones while driving and self-reported texting while driving have both shown small but persistent declines over the past three years. These drops are accompanied by increases in the percent of respondents reporting that they never use hand-held cell phones while driving (28 percent to 32 percent) and never text while driving (72 percent to 74 percent). A review of the programs and efforts in place to address cell phone use while driving in Maine might serve useful to continue to make strides in this area.

Overall, the results of these surveys are useful measures of the effectiveness of seat belt use campaigns in reaching the public. They also provide detailed information about characteristics of people who use seat belts regularly and those who don't and may point to ways to continue to increase the public's use of seat belts. Expanding them to include other key traffic safety issues such as alcohol, speed, and distracted driving, provides information about attitudes and behaviors in these areas and allows for the unique study of common patterns within individuals.

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Appendix A

This Driver Licensing Office is assisting in a vehicle safety study. Your answers to the following questions are voluntary and anonymous. Please complete the survey and then put it in the drop box.

1. Your sex: Male Female
2. Your age: Under 18 18-25 26-34 35-49 50-59 60 Plus
3. Your Zip Code: _____
4. About how many miles did you drive last year?
 Less than 5,000 5,000 to 10,000 10,001 to 15,000 More than 15,000
5. What type of vehicle do you drive most often?
 Passenger car Pickup truck Sport utility vehicle Minivan Full van Other
6. How often do you use seat belts when you drive or ride in a car, van, sport utility vehicle or pickup?
 Always Nearly always Sometimes Seldom Never
7. Compared to the last couple of years, would you say you now wear your seat belt:
 Much less often Less often About the same More often Much more often
8. What do you think the chances are of getting a ticket if you don't wear your seat belt?
 Always Nearly always Sometimes Seldom Never
9. In the past 60 days, have you seen or heard about extra enforcement where police were looking at seat belt use?
 Yes No
If yes, where did you see or hear about it? (Check all that apply):
 Newspaper Radio TV Poster Web site Police checkpoint Other _____
If yes, what did it say:
 Click It or Ticket Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest Buckle Up. No Excuses!
 Survive Your Drive Other _____
10. In the past 60 days, how many times have you driven a motor vehicle within 2 hours after drinking alcoholic beverages? _____ (number of times)
11. In the past 60 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about police enforcement of alcohol impaired driving (or drunk driving) laws? Yes No
12. What do you think the chances are of someone getting arrested if they drive after drinking?
 Always Nearly always Sometimes Seldom Never
13. On a local road with a speed limit of 30 mph, how often do you drive faster than 35 mph?
 Always Nearly always Sometimes Seldom Never
14. In the past 60 days, have you read, seen or heard anything about police enforcement of speed laws?
 Yes No
15. What do you think the chances are of getting a ticket if you drive over the speed limit?
 Always Nearly always Sometimes Seldom Never
16. How often do you talk on a hand-held cellular phone when you drive?
 Always Nearly always Sometimes Seldom Never
17. How often do you send text messages or emails on a hand-held cellular phone when you drive?
 Always Nearly always Sometimes Seldom Never