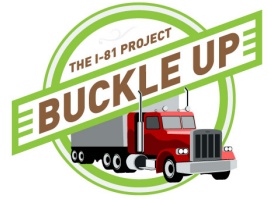


The I-81 Project



Main Goals of The I-81 Project

- > Targeting aggressive driving in trucks and passenger vehicles
- > Increasing seatbelt usage among truck drivers
- > Educating all drivers on the importance of sharing the road

Drive Smart Virginia Keeps on Trucking

For nearly five years, DRIVE SMART Virginia (DSV) has worked to encourage safety among Virginia’s truck drivers...the men and women who cover thousands of miles each year to transport and deliver countless commodities. We feel safety is paramount for those who perform one of the most dangerous jobs in the country, which helped lead to the **Be Ready Be Buckled** campaign.

Be Ready Be Buckled was born in 2005 out of the fact that truckers buckle up at a lesser rate than the national average. Grant funding from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has enabled DSV’s safety-belt promotion with truckers along both I-95 and I-81. In 2005, just 58.5% of drivers were wearing their belts. Results from the 2009 Be Ready Be Buckled campaign conducted from May 14-June 5 show that the rate of truckers buckling up is at 73%, a huge improvement, thanks to ongoing education, law enforcement, and the

concern of truckers who care about their safety and that of their fellow drivers.

DSV has listened to drivers, camped out at local (Virginia) truck stops, Twittered, Facebooked, written and researched the trade in order to learn how to communicate better with the industry. Looking forward, DSV wants to not only improve safety, but find out more about you. What are you thinking? How can we work together? With such a diverse population, obviously there are a lot of opinions amongst truckers in regard to seat belt use, road safety, and driver behaviors. Currently, our focus is working with truckers along I-81—a beautiful, but often dangerous, stretch of highway. Attention has been heaped on I-81 due to the volume of trucks that need to travel these windy, up and down roads. Traveled by tourists, truckers, college students, and local

residents, more and more stories about about crashes. Our goal—like yours—is to make every driver’s trip a safe one. While DSV cooperates with state and national agencies, DSV is an independent nonprofit working on behalf of all Virginia’s drivers to make our roadways safe—not a regulatory agency or another group trying to sell something.

This year we look forward to working closely with the Virginia Trucking Association and Safety Council to further our project and work more intimately with Virginia’s trucking community.

We exist to serve you better and want to hear from you. Say hi to Kristin on I-81 or check her out on Twitter (Twitter handle: *Kristruck*). Safe travels!

DRIVE SMART Virginia (DSV) is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit out of Richmond, Virginia, committed to improving safety on Virginia’s roadways. Visit our truck I-81 project online at www.drivesmartva.org OR CALL KRISTIN SMOLENSKI AT 276-206-6963.

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Drive Smart Virginia Targets Safety on I-81 in Virginia

Utilizing a seatbelt while driving a truck reduces the risk of serious injury by 60%. This is just one of the reasons why Drive Smart Virginia has chosen the important cause of educating CMV drivers about the benefits of buckling up in their truck. Interstate 81 in Virginia sees crowds of trucks passing through from neighboring states such as Tennessee and Maryland. The large number of trucks traveling on this

interstate makes it an excellent project area for us to spread the word about seatbelt safety.

The 2009-2010 Be Ready Be Buckled campaign will broaden focus to not only increase seatbelt usage but also to educate the public on the importance of sharing the road with commercial motor vehicles and refraining from aggressive driving. Outreach will include presentations, educational materials, truck stop presence and signage

among various other efforts.

Seatbelt surveys will be conducted before, during and after the outreach blitz, which will take place during the Click It or Ticket campaign in May. These surveys will show whether heavy police presence and constant messaging have an effect on truck drivers wearing their seatbelts. In past similar projects, we have found that these factors do cause an increase in belt usage.

Want to be a Part of the Project?

We are putting together an advisory committee composed of various individuals involved in the traffic safety and trucking community. Members of the committee will participate in the project by responding to emails about steps that we will take to make each mission successful.



Want to share the buckle up message? Click it or Ticket signs are available at no charge to place on the exterior of trucks. Signs are 14" x 22". Call Kristin at 276-206-6963 to order signs for your trucks!

Follow Our Project...

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How Companies Can Keep Their Drivers Safe

Buckling up saves the trucker and the company money. If a driver gets into a crash, a seatbelt can keep the driver stable and in control of their vehicle. A seatbelt can also save a driver's life and keep a driver from sustaining serious injuries in an accident. Serious injuries and major truck damage can be very expensive when you factor medical and insurance costs and disability payments among other expenses. Encourage your drivers to always buckle up while driving.

Here are some ways to ensure that seatbelts are being utilized:

- Safety belts should fit properly and comfortably. There are devices such as an extender that can be purchased to make seatbelts more comfortable.
- Inspect seat belt maintenance regularly.
- Use detection/enforcement strategies such as observational surveys or evaluations.
- Establish a company-wide safety belt policy.

- Give incentives for compliance of policy and discipline for non-compliance.
- Set an example...management should be wearing their seatbelts as well.
- Simple reminders to buckle up such as signs, emails, and slips in paychecks can be effective. Also reminders such as visual and audio can be installed into trucks.

