



# DRIVER SAFETY LETTER

**NPTC**  
National Private Truck Council

**CENTERLINE**  
A TRUEBLUE COMPANY

## Seat Belts Save Lives

May 2024

Every year, thousands of people die in vehicle crashes because they are not wearing a seat belt. In 2020, more than 38,000 people died on the road—a 7% increase from 2019. In that same year, in accidents involving commercial vehicles, nearly 5,000 people died and more than 146,000 were injured.

According to surveys conducted by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, nearly 14% of all commercial motor vehicle drivers do not wear a seat belt. In fatal crashes, approximately 50% of large truck occupants who did not wear seat belts lost their lives.

Federal regulations require commercial vehicle drivers to buckle up. So why are drivers not using seat belts? Frankly, there are a lot of myths out there. Let's set the record straight.

**MYTH 1:** Safety belts are uncomfortable and restrict movement.

**FACT:** Once the seat, lap and shoulder belt are correctly adjusted, most drivers find discomfort and restrictive movement can be alleviated.

**MYTH 2:** Wearing a safety belt is a personal decision that doesn't affect anyone else.

**FACT:** Not wearing a safety belt can affect your family and loved ones. It can also affect other motorists since wearing a safety belt can help you avoid losing control of your truck in a crash.

**MYTH 3:** Safety belts prevent your escape from a burning or submerged vehicle.

**FACT:** Safety belts can keep you from being knocked unconscious, improving your chances of escape.

**MYTH 4:** It's better to be thrown clear of the wreckage in the event of a crash.

**FACT:** An occupant of a vehicle is four times as likely to be fatally injured when thrown from the vehicle.

**MYTH 5:** It takes too much time to fasten your safety belt 20 times a day.

**FACT:** Buckling up takes about three seconds. Even buckling up 20 times a day requires only one minute.

**MYTH 6:** Good truck drivers don't need to wear safety belts.

**FACT:** Good drivers usually don't cause collisions, but it's possible that during your career you will be involved in a crash caused by a bad driver, bad weather, mechanical failure, or tire blowout. Wearing a safety belt prevents injuries and fatalities by preventing ejection and protecting your head and spinal cord.

**MYTH 7:** A large truck will protect you. Safety belts are unnecessary.

**FACT:** Last year, more than 30% of the truck occupant fatalities were not wearing seat belts

**MYTH 8:** Safety belts aren't necessary for low-speed driving.

**FACT:** In a frontal collision occurring at 30 mph, an unbelted person continues to move forward at 30 mph causing them to hit the windshield at about 30 mph. This is the same velocity a person falling from the top of a three-story building would experience upon impact with the ground.

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*The NPTC Monthly Driver Safety Letter, jointly sponsored by NPTC and [Centerline Drivers](#), is a Microsoft Word document that you can print out and post as is, if appropriate, or modify any way you wish to make it a better fit for your drivers, including adding your company logo. If you are already doing an in-house letter, you may find information here that you can cut and paste into your own letter. If you are interested in specific subjects, or have any comments/feedback, contact Tom Moore, CTP, at [tmoores@nptc.org](mailto:tmoores@nptc.org) or (703)838-8898.*