



# Jesse White

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## SECRETARY OF STATE

# NEWS

### **For Immediate Release:**

May 24, 2005

### **For More Information Contact:**

Dave Druker  
Elizabeth Kaufman

## **Secretary White Urges Drivers To Wear Safety Belts As Memorial Day Approaches** *Secretary Of State Police Will Be Out Patrolling The Roads*

With Memorial Day approaching, Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White is reminding drivers to use their safety belts and be sure children are properly restrained. Last year, twenty-two people were killed on Illinois roadways during the Memorial Day weekend.

“Keeping our roads safe means that we wear our safety belts everyday and make sure our children are properly buckled up,” White said. “And remember drinking and driving is a dangerous combination, so celebrate the holiday safely. Your best defense against a drunk driver is your safety belt.”

Secretary of State police will be out patrolling the roads from May 23<sup>rd</sup> through June 4<sup>th</sup>, which coincides with Buckle Up America Week.

Safety belts save an estimated 14,000 lives of people over the age of four annually, according the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children from 2 to 14 years old.
- According to NHTSA in 2003, there were 471 passenger vehicle occupant fatalities among children under 5 years of age. An estimated 167 (35 percent) were totally unrestrained.
- It is important that child passengers not only be properly restrained in motor vehicles, as required by law, but also that child safety seats be properly installed in the vehicle.
- Adults who buckle up---usually buckle up their children.

Illinois state laws require all drivers and front seat passengers to wear safety belts and children under age eight to be secured in an appropriate child restraint system.

Parents should never place rear-facing child safety seats in the front passenger seat with an active airbag, White said. Also, infants should remain in rear-facing child safety seats until they are at least one year of age and 20 pounds. The safest place for children 12 years of age and under is in the back seat.

Under Secretary White’s administration, Child Passenger Safety Seat Fitting Stations have been opened to ensure safety seats are installed properly.

The fitting stations are part of his statewide “Kids In Safe Seats” (KISS) program. They include stations in Springfield, Macomb, Niles, and Chicago.

For more information on child safety seats or to make an appointment to have your seat checked by a technician, visit [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com) or call the toll-free Traffic Safety hotline at 866-247-0213.