

Nighttime Occupant Protection Enforcement:

Problem Identification:

Louisiana is currently classified as a lower belt use state under MAP-21. As part of a comprehensive review and assessment of Louisiana's occupant protection program, the state conducted the first ever nighttime survey. The survey was conducted between November 13, 2012 and November 16, 2012 in Caddo, Calcasieu, East Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Jefferson, Ouachita, Rapides and St. Charles Parishes. Observation sites were selected from a subset of sites used for the annual daytime observation survey to provide a representative sample of nighttime occupant protection usage rates. A copy of the complete survey methodology and results are available on the LHSC website at:

http://www.lahighwaysafety.org/pdf/2012_nighttime_seatbelt.pdf

The survey results indicate that Louisiana's nighttime usage rate for the areas surveyed is 11 percentage points below their daytime rate. The statistically weighted results for the areas were 75% at night and 86% at the same sites during the day.

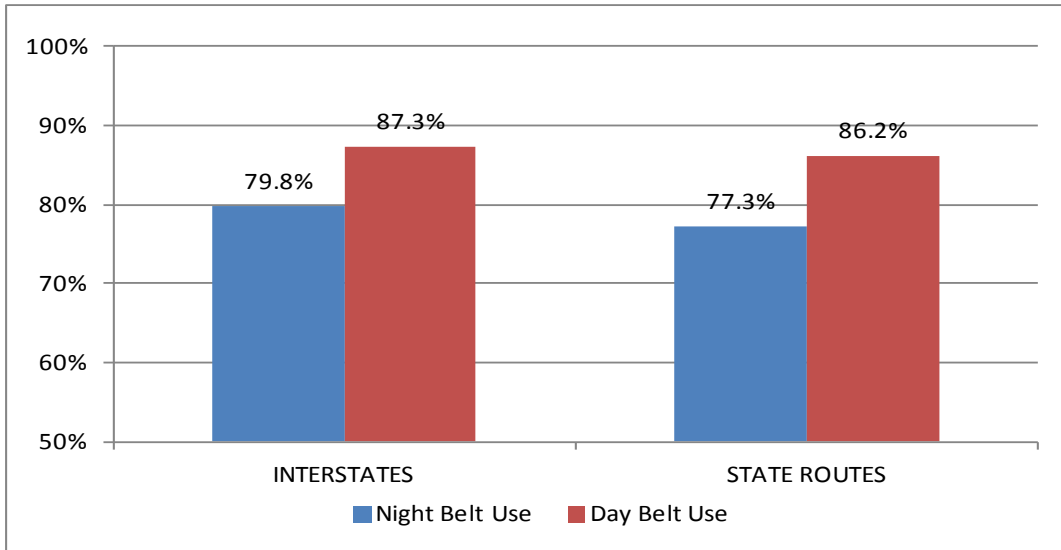
Table 1: 2012 Seat Belt Use Rate at Nighttime and Daytime¹

	Night	Day
Use Rate - Raw	78.3%	86.6%
	(5,458)	(10,752)
Use Rate – (Averaged 1:1)	75.0%	86.0%

¹ Data collected at 39 observation sites; not statewide.

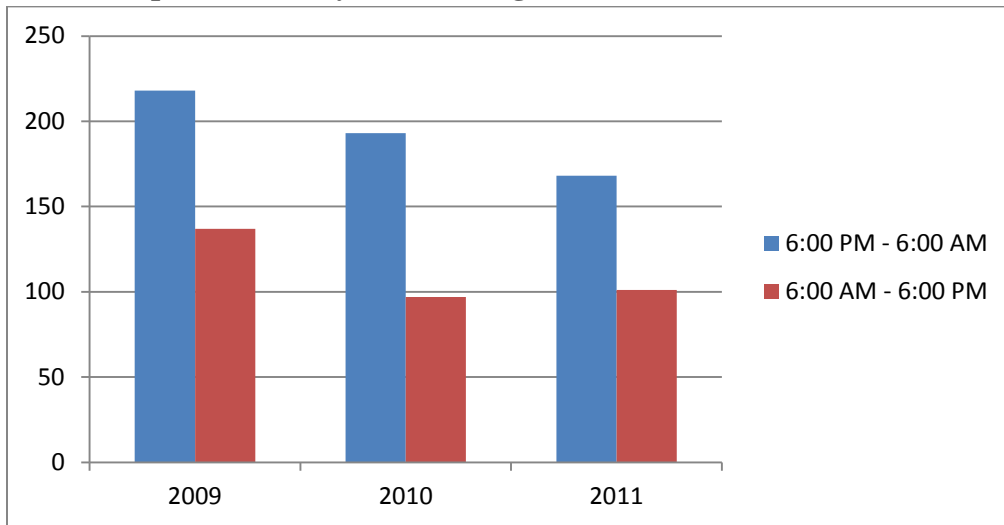
The lower usage rates applies to both Interstate and State routes.

Figure 1: Difference in Seat Belt Use at Night & Day by Road Type



The LHSC also conducted a timeline analysis of unrestrained fatalities and injuries for the years 2009, 2010, and 2011. Unrestrained fatalities and injuries were classified as daytime or nighttime depending on the hour of the crash. For classification purposes, daytime fatalities and injuries were those occurring between the hours of 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM and nighttime fatalities and injuries between 6:00 PM and 6:00 AM.

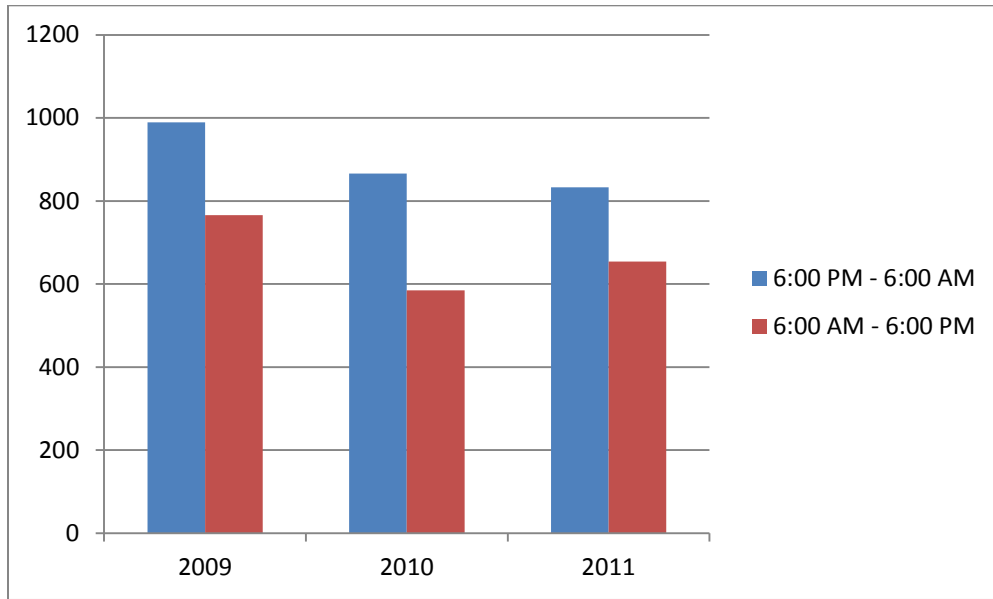
Figure 2: Comparison of Daytime and Nighttime Unrestrained Fatalities in Louisiana



Louisiana clearly has a greater percentage of unbelted fatalities and injuries occurring at night. In 2009, 61% of the unbelted fatalities occurred at night. In 2010, 66% of the unbelted fatalities occurred at night and 62% occurred at night in 2011.

Unrestrained injuries also occurred during the night at a greater rate than during the day.

Figure 3: Comparison of Daytime and Nighttime Unrestrained Injuries in Louisiana



For additional data about unrestrained fatalities at the parish level please visit the following link:

<http://datareports.lsu.edu/reports.aspx?p=ci&yr=2012&rpt=K2>

This link brings visitors to Chart K2: Safety Belt/Harness Use of Fatal Occupants for Louisiana in 2012.

By clicking on the word “Louisiana”, the visitor can select the parish of their choice to see the unrestrained fatality numbers for that specific parish. By clicking on the year at the top of the page, different years of data may be viewed.