

FIELD OBSERVATION OF SAFETY BELT USE IN WISCONSIN

July 2016¹



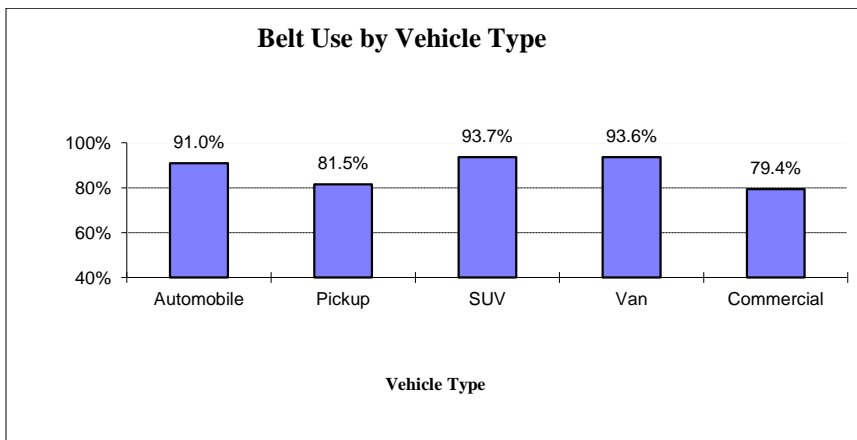
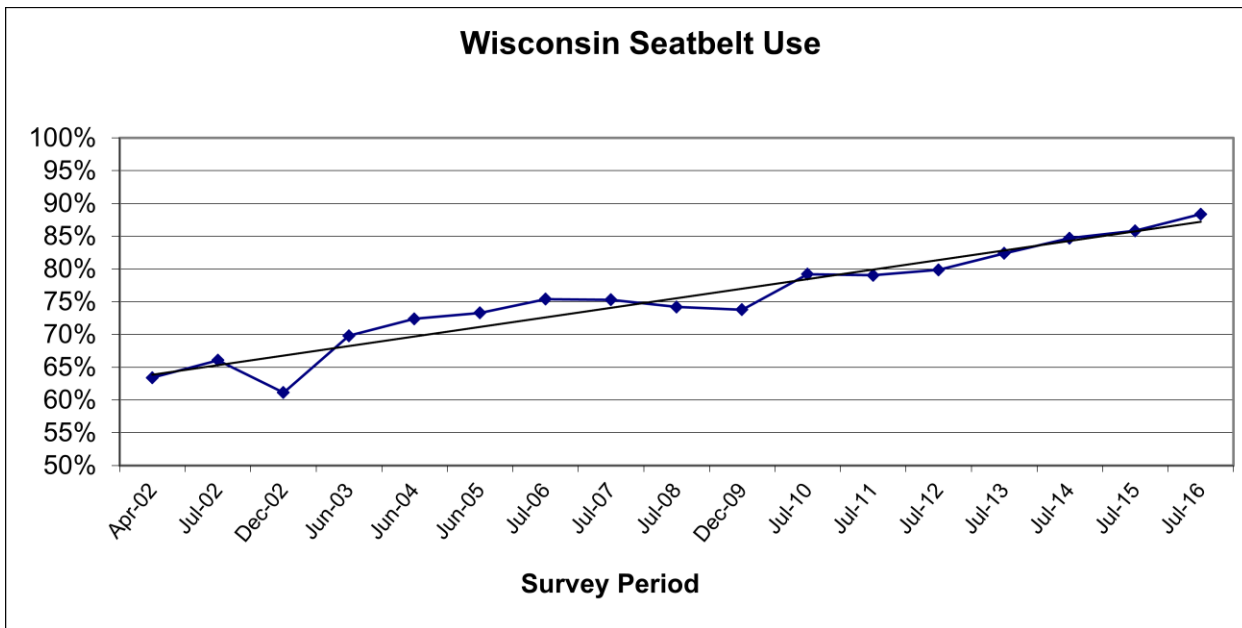
Since March 1987, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has conducted annual statewide observation surveys of safety belt use. Wisconsin enacted a mandatory safety belt law with secondary enforcement in December 1987, a mandatory child safety seat law in May 1992, and a primary safety belt enforcement law in July 2009.

RESULTS

In July 2016, **88.4%** of passenger vehicle occupants (front outboard*) used their safety belts.

*Front outboard refers to the driver and the right front seat passenger.

(Note: The chronology on the graph is not to scale due to irregularity in collection dates.)



Occupants of SUVs were most likely to be wearing their safety belts. 93.7% of front seat van occupants wore safety belts.

Occupants of Pickup and Commercial trucks were the least likely to use their belts. Little more than eighty-percent of Pickup truck occupants (81.5%) and slightly less than eighty-percent of Commercial truck occupants (79.4%) wore safety belts.

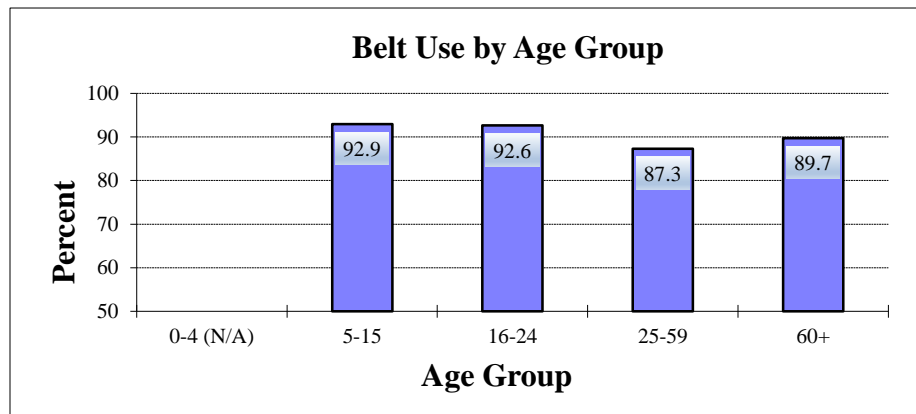
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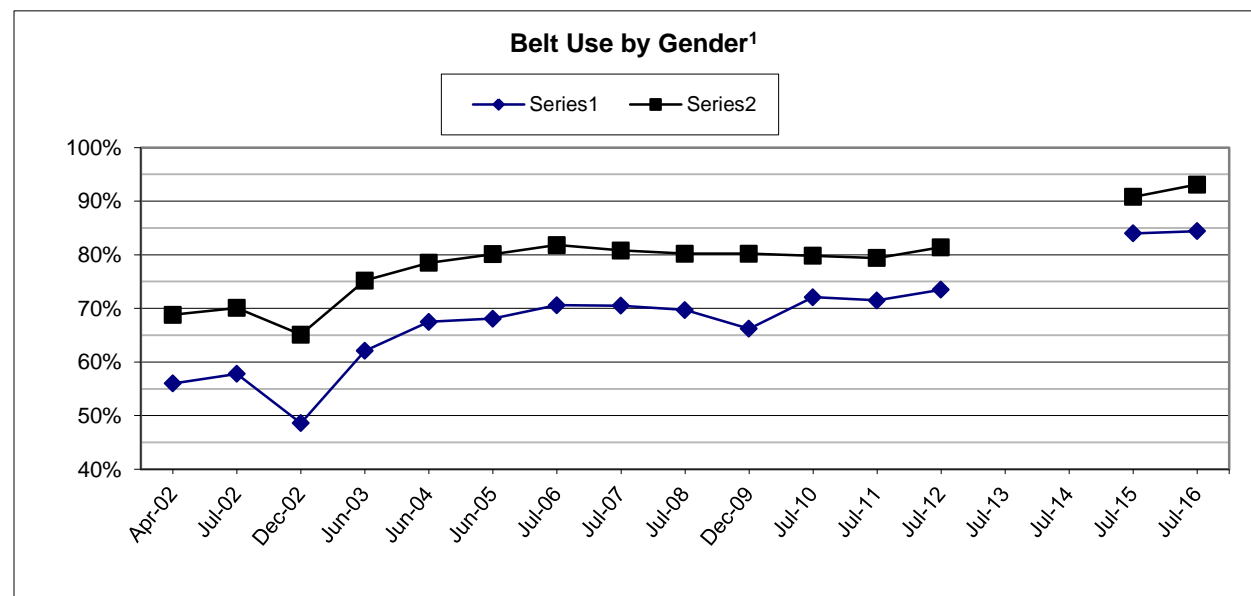
Belt use is highest (92.9%) among children 5-15 years of age and second highest for the category representing the age group of 16-24 years of age.

(Please note: The 0-4 Age Group was excluded from the survey, because children who should be legally restrained in car seats, as is the case with this particular age group, should also be in the back passenger compartment of the vehicle for legal purposes.)



Belt Use by Gender

Wisconsin has consistently displayed a gender difference of approximately 10% or more in safety belt use. In the most recent survey, 93.1% of females wore their belts, while only 84.4% of males did, giving a 8.7% difference, instead of the usual 10% or greater difference between genders.¹

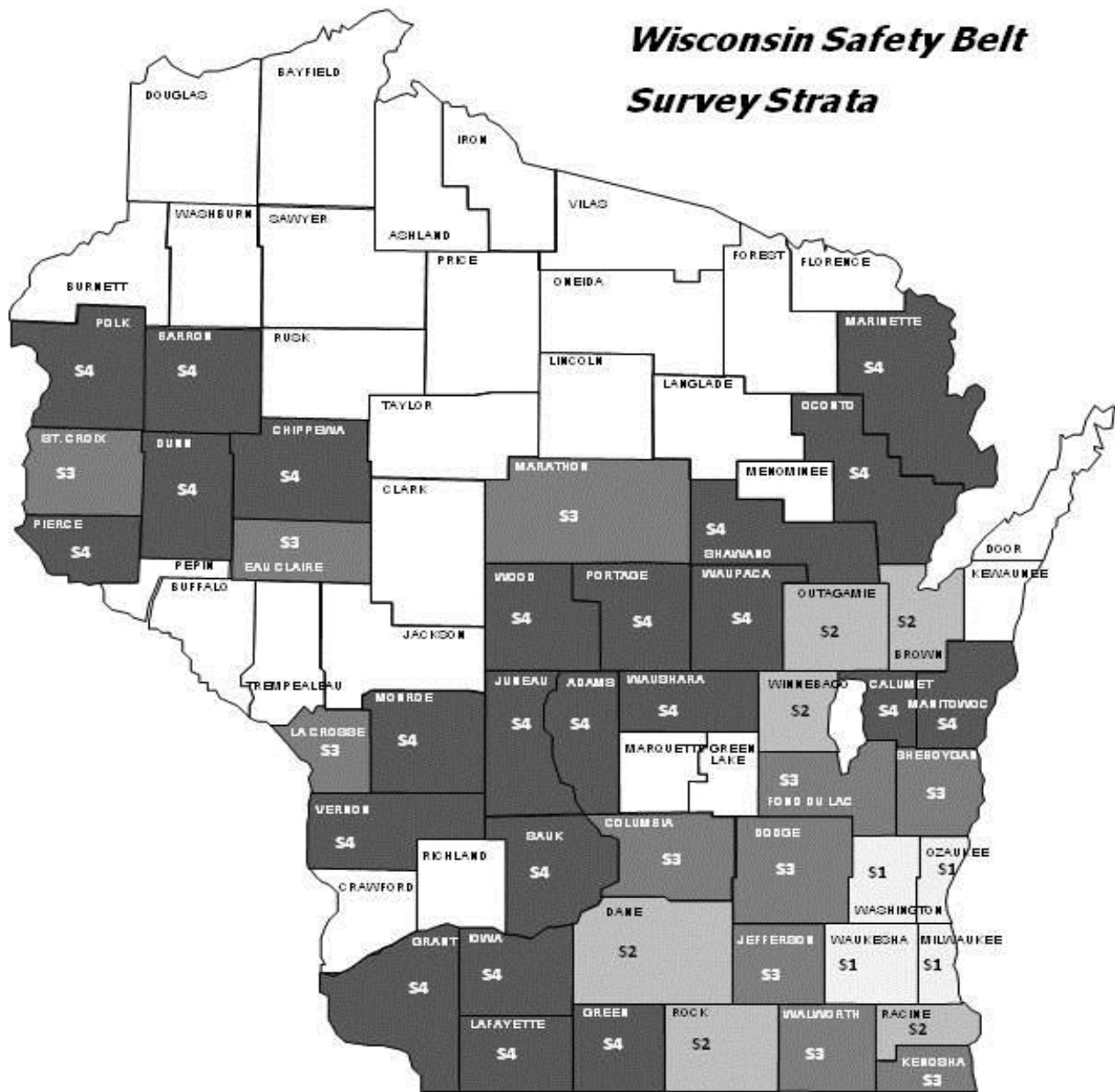


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Wisconsin Safety Belt Survey Strata



- S1** Stratum 1 - Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha Counties
- S2** Stratum 2 - Brown, Dane, Outagamie, Racine, Rock, and Winnebago Counties
- S3** Stratum 3 - Columbia, Dodge, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Jefferson, Kenosha, La Crosse, Marathon, Saint Croix, Sheboygan, and Walworth Counties
- S4** Stratum 4 - Adams, Barron, Calumet, Chippewa, Dunn, Grant, Green, Iowa, Juneau, Lafayette, Manitowoc, Marinette, Monroe, Oconto, Pierce, Polk, Portage, Sauk, Shawano, Vernon, Waupaca, Waushara, and Wood Counties

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Belt Use by Region (Stratum)

Belt use varies by 3.5% across the state. The Stratum 3 and Stratum 4 areas are the highest at 88.9%, and the Stratum 2 area is lowest at 85.4%. Please note the Belt Usage estimated percentage, increased by 5.8% for Stratum 1, from 2015, which is also reflected in the narrowing the variation, between the highest and lowest percentage belt use strata, from 9.8% in 2015, to 3.5% in 2016.

| Strata² | | Belt Usage 2016 (%) |
|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Stratum 1 | 86.0 |
| 2 | Stratum 2 | 85.4 |
| 3 | Stratum 3 | 88.9 |
| 4 | Stratum 4 | 88.9 |

¹The data for the age, gender, and the vehicle type variables were not collected in 2013 and 2014. Graphs and narratives that had been included in the Seat Belt Survey Monographs from previous years, for these three variables will not be present during the 2013-2014 time period.

²A stratum consists of one of four groups of counties, which are not necessarily contiguous that constitute a comparable number of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and altogether make up 85+ percent of the three-year average, of statewide motor vehicle fatalities. The counties making up the 85+ percent of 3-year statewide fatalities are necessary to meet the NHTSA guidelines for a seatbelt observation survey.

Except for Stratum 1, which represents metropolitan Milwaukee and is intrinsically contiguous, the other three strata each represent groups of counties that are by their nature have similar population size and characteristics. Please note that Stratum 2 represents the counties with the larger cities (outside of metro Milwaukee) of a more urban environment in Wisconsin, with Stratum 3 mostly representing the counties with the small to mid-size municipalities and a greater combination of urban and rural areas, whereas Stratum 4 represents the counties with the smallest municipalities, which are more rural in their nature when taken together with the other three strata. Altogether, the four strata make up the forty-four counties that have a possibility of having sites selected to be surveyed for seatbelt usage observations.