

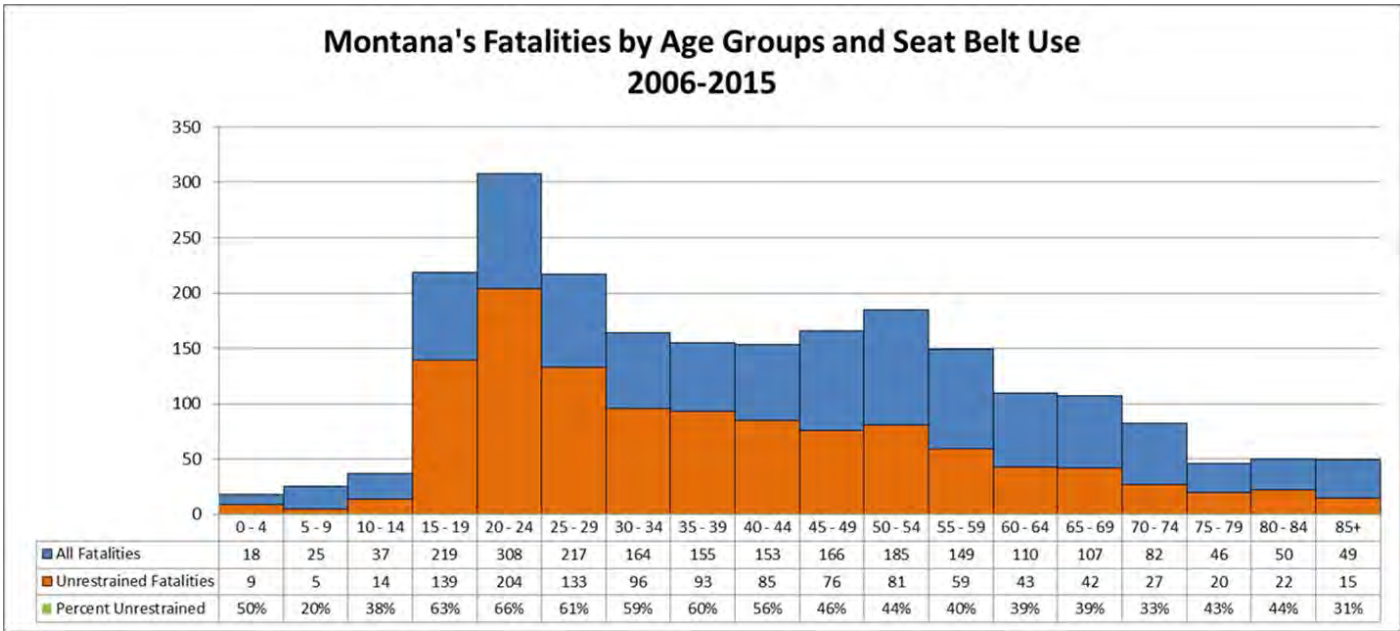


FACT SHEET

SEAT BELTS SAVE LIVES

Safety or seat belts are “preventive medicine.” Buckling up is the single most effective act to protect occupants in the event of a motor vehicle crash. Montana law (MCA 61-13-103 and 61-9-420) places responsibility on the driver to ensure each occupant is properly buckled or in a child safety restraint every trip, every time. Seat belts with airbags and child safety seats provide the following major functions:

- Seat belts help prevent ejection from the vehicle during a crash. The risk of death is **five times greater** if an individual is thrown from the vehicle.
- Seat belts hold the body in the seat during sudden stops and turns, giving the driver better control over the vehicle – airbags alone do not protect occupants.
- Seat belts, in conjunction with airbags, restrain and decelerate the body’s movement as the vehicle decelerates, thus minimizing bodily injury.
- Unbuckled bodies can collide at crash force into other passengers in the same vehicle, seriously injuring or even killing them during a crash.
- Seat belt use should become a habit early in life. Parents/caregivers can ensure their children are properly buckled in child safety seats and their teens are buckled safely as drivers and as passengers EVERY TIME.



The orange section of the graph shows how many people were not wearing seat belts and died in a crash