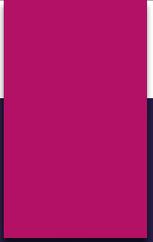




OP Safety of Elder Drivers

FLORIDA OCCUPANT PROTECTION COALITION

NOVEMBER 20 AND 21, 2019



[Click on the link to view video](#)

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/when-seat-belts-pose-a-safety-hazard/>

FOPC Mini Meeting

An element of FOPC Action Plan 5.1c is to develop a reference card which will help law enforcement officers recognize when restraints are not being used properly regarding elder drivers

A meeting was planned with FOPC member and D4 LEL Charles Kane, FOPC member and CarFit expert and national representative Fran Carlin-Rogers and SMFL Coalition member and D1 LEL Tom Arsenault to discuss the priorities of Occupant Protection regarding elder drivers

Discussion



Our discussion during this meeting focused on what information we want to pass along to law enforcement for consideration while engaged with an elder driver



In the NHTSA Publication – “Occupant Protection Issues Among Older Drivers and Passengers,” NHTSA focuses on drivers **65 and older**



We identified several points for consideration

Use of Seat Belt



Is the driver wearing their seat belt. Yes or No. If not; why not? The law enforcement officer should be sensitive to the reasons.



Do they realize Seat Belts must be used with Airbags

Each one will provide protection but not enough by itself
Use of seat belts with airbags provides the greatest level of protection from injury



Are they wearing their seat belt correctly? Yes or no. If not; why not?

Use of Seat Belt



Is there a medical reason for not using a seat belt



Driver may wish to consult with their doctor



Mobility – Unable to reach for the belt



Commercial remedies can be purchased off the shelf

Steering Wheel Angle

The steering wheel housing with the airbag in it's center, should be adjusted so the center is aimed toward the driver's chest and Not the head.

Steering Wheel Distance

Distance between the driver's chest or torso and the steering wheel/air bag.

- ▶ The golden rule is 10 inches or more between the driver and the air bag
 - ▶ Most vehicles have forward and rearward adjustability
- ▶ While checking for this measurement try to ensure the driver's line of site is at least three inches above the steering wheel
 - ▶ Many vehicles today have height adjustability



Head Restraint

- ▶ The head restraint is a safety device used to prevent whiplash and resulting neck injuries. It is in the correct position when it is within 2 ½ inches or closer from the center of the back area of the driver's head
 - ▶ Touching the back of the head is OK



Remedies



SIMPLE
ADJUSTMENTS TO
SEAT HEIGHT AND
OR DISTANCE
TO/FROM STEERING
WHEEL



REFERRAL TO CARFIT
-
[HTTPS://WWW.CAR-
FIT.ORG/](https://www.car-fit.org/)



REFERRAL TO DRIVER
REHAB SPECIALIST



EDUCATION



SAFE MOBILITY FOR
LIFE – RESOURCES



OVERT THE COUNTER
SOLUTIONS

NHTSA Publication



NHTSA Publication – “Occupant Protection Issue Among Older Drivers and Passengers”



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is concerned about highway safety issues for older adults and is interested in understanding what contributes to seat belt use or nonuse among people 65 and older.



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