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## **SHOCK SURVEY DRIVES HOME MESSAGE TO DRIVE GREEN, DRIVE SAFELY**

Nearly a third of drivers have not worn a seatbelt while in a moving car at some time in the last year. That's a key finding in a survey carried out by motor industry body SMMT for the launch of a new guide to responsible motoring called Drive Green, Drive Safely.

Londoners are worst at ignoring advice to clunk-click on every trip, while under 35s are far more likely to risk their lives than older motorists. Women are also better than men while motorists in the North East are the most diligent at buckling-up in the UK.

Survey results also revealed some of the most basic checks and advice from car makers, government and safety bodies falling on deaf ears. For example, a staggering 72 per cent of drivers have not read the Highway Code since passing their driving test while 15 per cent do not bother to test tyre pressures between services, a crucial safety check that also helps minimise tailpipe emissions.

Commenting on the results, SMMT chief executive Christopher Macgowan said, 'Simple steps like reading the Highway Code, taking time to fit a child seat properly and checking tyres regularly could prevent many people from needlessly coming to harm on the roads. Yet millions of motorists are guilty of taking safety for granted. The motor industry has a responsibility to drive this message home and every motorist should make it a 2006 resolution to do their bit.'

Despite the launch of a new colour-coded environmental label last year, the survey also reveals how green issues languish on the list of priorities for the majority of car buyers. Buying a car with low emissions is top of the agenda for fewer than three in 100. However, fuel economy, which is linked to low emissions, is far higher on buyers' radar: one in five claiming it is the most important factor in a purchase.

A copy of the full survey - which was carried out by Tickbox.net among 2,048 adults aged over 17 - is available on the home page of [www.smmt.co.uk](http://www.smmt.co.uk) along with free PDF downloads of Drive Green, Drive Safely.



## **Drive Green, Drive Safely launched today**

SMMT's Drive Green, Drive Safely, will be launched tonight at an MP's reception in Westminster.

Featuring advice, tips and information, the guide presents a series of simple steps that every driver can take to limit the impact of their motoring. It also presents information about what the motor industry is doing to make safer, more environmentally friendly vehicles.

### **Drive Green**

On eco-motoring the guide presents tips like the following:

- Servicing your car regularly will guarantee best performance, the lowest emissions and strongest re-sale values.
- Use the new car green label to compare CO2 emissions and average annual fuel costs. Could you go greener and cheaper?
- Check your tyre pressures regularly. Incorrectly pressured tyres increase fuel consumption and emissions and pose a serious safety hazard.
- Use journey planners to avoid congestion hot spots and minimise delays.
- Consider alternatives to the car, walk the kids to school or use public transport if it is reasonably priced and convenient.

### **Drive Safely**

On safety, the guide offers simple tips for safer motoring such as:

- Read the Highway Code. Put a copy in your car today - and refer to it when in doubt.
- Always wear your seat belt, read your owners' manual and discuss any new car safety issues with your dealer.
- Take time to fit your child's seat: it might be the most important thing you do today.
- Consider more training to stamp out bad habits and improve safety skills. Avoid any form of confrontation with another driver.

As well as free downloads via the SMMT web site, copies of the guide will be distributed to key safety, environmental and consumer bodies across the UK in the coming weeks.