

# Seat Belt Non-Use in Idaho: 1988 - 2008

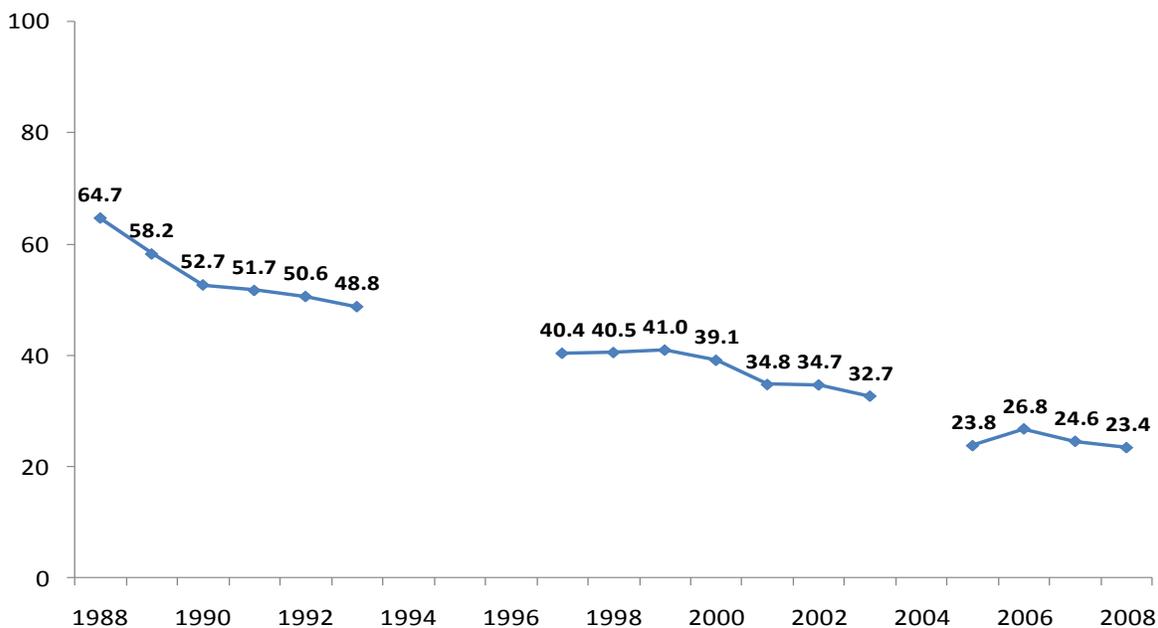
## Introduction

A leading cause of death in America among individuals six to 34 years old is road fatalities<sup>1</sup>. In 2007, the Idaho Transportation Department estimated the average economic cost of road fatalities to the state at \$5.8 million per occurrence, or \$1,461,600,000 total<sup>2</sup>. Between 1988 and 2007, Idaho has consistently been above the national fatality rate per 100 million annual vehicular miles traveled. Sixty-five percent of those killed in motor vehicle accidents in Idaho were not wearing seat belts at the time.

## Trend of Seat Belt Non-Use in Idaho

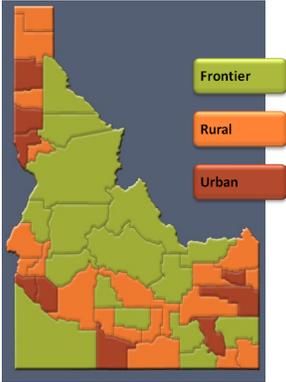
**Percentage of Idaho Adults Who Did Not Regularly Wear a Seat Belt, 1988-2008**

Breaks in the trendline represent years when no data were available



The percentage of Idaho adults who do not regularly wear a seat belt steadily decreased between 1988 to 2008. Idaho adults in 1988 were 2.6 times more likely than were adults in 2008 to not wear a seat belt regularly. The most recent significant decrease in the prevalence of seat belt non-use occurred between 2003 (32.7 percent) and 2005 (23.8 percent).

# Urban, Rural, and Frontier Counties



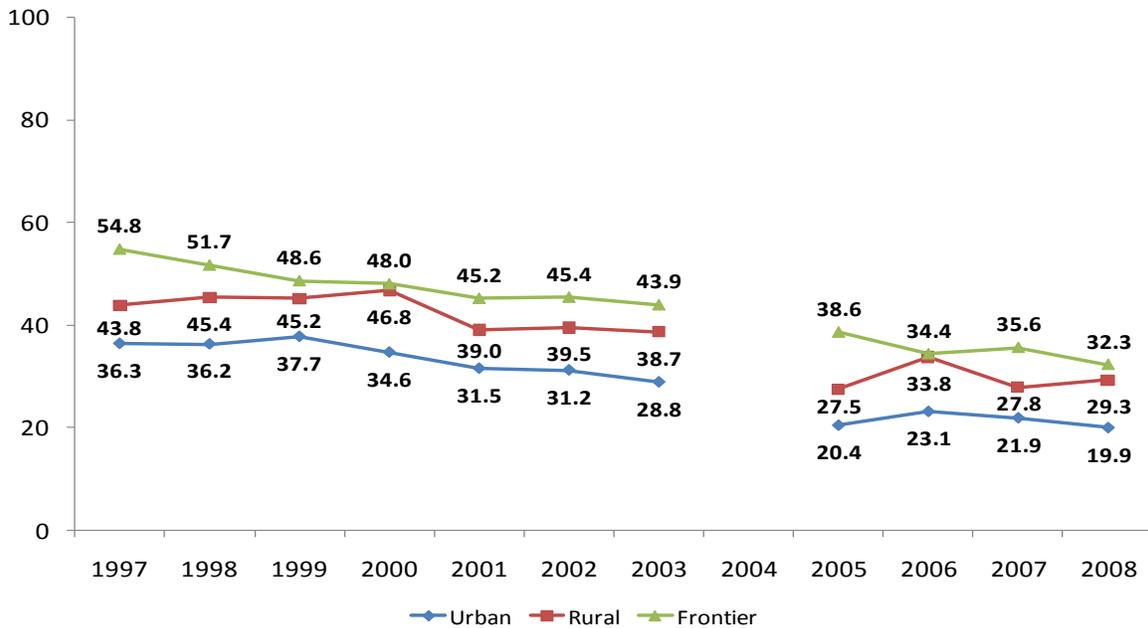
For the purposes of this factsheet, counties in Idaho are classified as shown below

- **Urban** counties have a population center of at least 20,000.
- **Rural** counties have at least six people per square mile and no population centers larger than 19,999.
- **Frontier** counties have fewer than six people per square mile and no population centers larger than 19,999.

In 1997, seven counties were considered urban, 21 as rural, and 16 as frontier. In 2008, nine counties were considered urban, 19 rural, and 16 frontier.

## Seat Belt Non-Use in Urban, Rural, and Frontier Counties

**Percentage of Idaho Adults Who Did Not Regularly Wear a Seat Belt:  
Urban, Rural, and Frontier Counties, 1997-2008**  
Breaks in the trendline represent years when no data were available



Seat belt non-use has decreased steadily in urban, rural, and frontier counties since 1997. Even so, decreases from year-to-year were not always significant.

- The prevalence did not decrease significantly for urban counties from 1997 to 2000. However, in 2001 it decreased to 31.5 percent and again in 2005 to 20.4 percent.
- The prevalence did not decrease significantly for rural counties from 1997 to 2003. However, in 2005 it decreased to 27.5 percent.
- The prevalence did not decrease significantly for frontier counties from 1997 to 2002. However, in 2003 it decreased to 43.9 percent.

Adults living in either rural or frontier counties were significantly more likely to not wear a seat belt regularly than were adults living in urban counties.

### Sources

<sup>1</sup>Levitt, Steven D., Porter, Jack. (2001) "Sample Selection in the Estimation of Air Bag and Seat belt Effectiveness, *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, November, Vol. 83, No. 4, pp. 603-615.

<sup>2</sup>Idaho Department of Transportation. (2007) *Idaho Traffic Crashes 2007*.