



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

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The U.S. Department of Transportation Broadcast News Service for Wednesday, August 15, has a story on the seat belt interlock systems and two statements by Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar.

In compliance with a new Department of Transportation safety standard, most new 1974 passenger cars will be equipped with seat belt interlock systems. One manufacturer will have air cushions offered as an option on some luxury models. A car equipped with an interlock system cannot be started unless the belts in the system are fastened after the occupants are seated. Drivers and their right front seat passengers will have to follow the sequence of sitting down, fastening their belts, and then turning the ignition key or the car will not start. At a news conference in Detroit Tuesday night, Transportation Secretary Claude S. Brinegar made these comments on the interlock system.

"I think that they will push people in the direction that we think they very much need to be pushed -- which is to wear this very effective piece of equipment that's in the front seat. In very broad terms, if everybody in the country used the seat belts that they had in their car, we suspect that the savings in lives would be in the order of 10,000 a year across the nation. So the interlock is a way of kind of urging them to go a little bit further.

"I think it has done one thing -- that the old seat belt standards didn't do -- since it becomes virtually mandatory to wear it because the engine won't start, or the car won't move -- the auto manufacturers have turned their attention to making them more comfortable, and they're more easily adapted, and the harnesses, I think, are a much more intelligently designed system."

This has been the Transportation News Report.

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