

# MSU-ES Dawg Tracks



February, 2009

*Seven-Tenths of a Second*



Look at your watch and see how long one second really is. If you have a stop watch, try to stop the watch at *seven-tenths of a second*. Now that you know how long that is, consider what happens in the first *seven-tenths of a second* when an automobile traveling at 55 miles per hour hits a solid object and the driver is not wearing his/her seatbelt and shoulder harness.

- In the *first-tenth of a second*, the front bumper and grille collapse.
- In the *second-tenth of a second*, the hood crumples, raises and strikes the windshield while the rear wheels are lofted from the ground, still spinning at 55mph. Simultaneously, the fenders begin wrapping themselves around the object that was struck by the car. The frame of the car has stopped moving, but the rest of the car is still traveling at 55 mph. The driver stiffens his legs against the crash and they snap at the knee joint.
- During the *third-tenth of second*, the steering wheel starts to disintegrate in the driver's hands and the steering column is aimed at the driver's chest.
- The *fourth-tenth of a second* finds the first two feet of the car's front end wrecked, the rear moving at 35mph, but the driver's body still traveling at 55mph.
- In the *fifth-tenth of a second* (a "split second"), the driver is impaled on the steering column and his lungs begin to fill with blood.
- In the *sixth-tenth of a second*, the driver's feet are ripped out of his shoes, the brake pedal snaps off and the car frame buckles in the middle. The driver's head smashes through the windshield as the rear wheels fall back to earth.
- In the *seventh-tenth of a second*, doors fly open, hinges rip loose and the seats break free, striking the driver from behind. The driver does not feel the seat striking him, because he is already **dead!**

Just think what has happened in one second. Think about how long *one second* is the next time you decide not to wear your seatbelt. Think about how long *seven-tenths of a second* is. Now think how long eternity is.

Gory as this sounds, an accident like or similar to this can be avoided better than 90% of the time by using your seatbelt and shoulder harness. Buckling up should become as repetitious as opening the door to get in the vehicle.

**DRIVING SAFELY IS LIKE BREATHING ~  
IF YOU DON'T,  
YOU'LL PROBABLY END UP  
WITH A PROBLEM!**