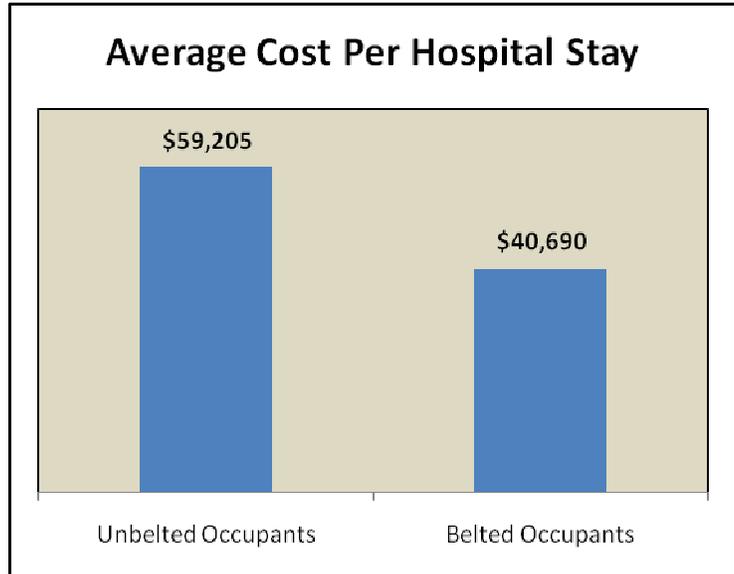


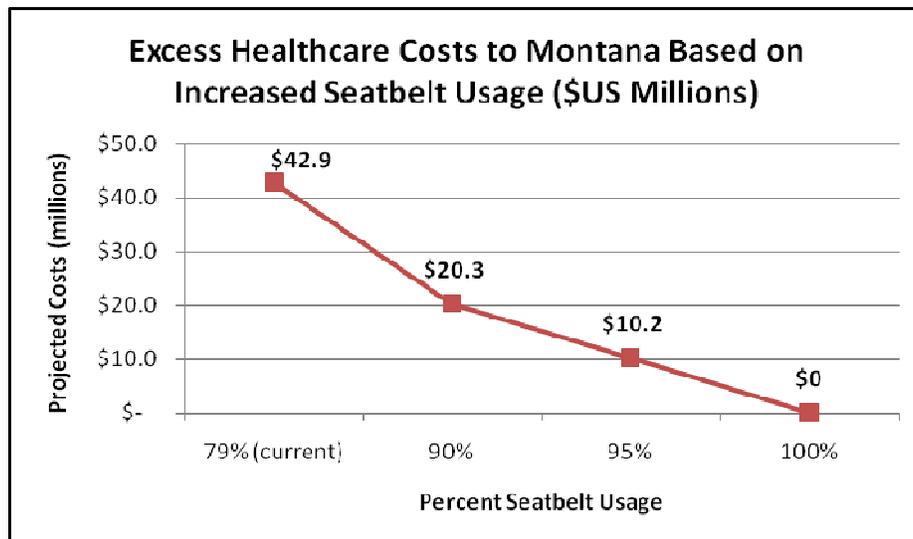
Seat Belt Use and Health Care Costs in Montana

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- From 2005 through 2009, **984 people were killed while driving on Montana roads**. Over two-thirds (686) of these individuals were unbelted.
- Each year in Montana, an estimated **887 unbelted** injured vehicle occupants are hospitalized for care. An estimated **819 of these hospital admissions** might be prevented if a seat belt had been used.
- Caring for unbelted Montana patients costs **\$42.9 million each year in direct inpatient health care costs**. These costs result from an increase in hospital admissions and higher costs per hospital stay among unbelted occupants.



- In Montana, over one-third (**36.2%**) of unrestrained occupants have no insurance. A significant portion of hospital costs for unbelted occupants are ultimately paid for by the state, **costing Montana over \$16.4 million annually for the hospital care of their preventable injuries**.



- The current price of a seat belt fine is **\$20**. If unbelted occupants paid higher ticket prices to cover medical expenses, **each ticket** for an unrestrained occupant **would cost \$1,217** to recover Montana state budget health care expenses.