



NEWS



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CHP AND OTS STRESS SAFETY TO HELP PUT THE BRAKES ON MOTORCYCLE-INVOLVED COLLISIONS

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Fatal collisions involving motorcyclists have been increasing in California over the past few years. In an effort to change this disturbing trend, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) are hoping to save lives through a month-long motorcycle safety and awareness campaign during May.

With more than 1.3 million licensed motorcycle riders in California, most drivers are likely to find themselves sharing the road with a motorcyclist on a regular basis.

“Regardless of your mode of travel, safety comes first,” said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. “By staying alert and using common sense and courtesy, drivers and riders alike can help to create a safer roadway environment for everyone.”

According to 2011 data from the CHP’s Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS), fatal motorcycle collisions accounted for nearly 16 percent of the total number of fatal collisions in California. SWITRS data also indicated the number of people killed in motorcycle-involved collisions increased nearly 20 percent from 2010 to 2011. An additional 8 percent increase was noted between 2011 and 2012, when 467 people died in motorcycle-involved collisions.

“Motorcycle riders must be mindful of their skills and vulnerabilities,” said OTS Director Rhonda Craft. “Meanwhile, other vehicle drivers must be mindful to always look for motorcycles. Getting home safely involves concentration on driving and consideration for everyone on the road.”

A key component to reduce the number of motorcycle-involved collisions is training. Regardless of a motorcyclist’s skill level, the CHP encourages all riders to seek life-long training opportunities. The California Motorcyclist Safety Program (CMSP) is the state’s official motorcycle training program. With more than 130 training sites throughout California, the CMSP offers courses for both new and returning riders. To enroll in a CMSP course, call 1(877) RIDE-411 or visit their Web site at <http://www.ca-msp.org>.

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Important safety reminders for motorcyclists:

- Wear a helmet and protective gear. “No skin below the chin.” It can save your life.
- Watch your speed.
- Assume people in cars do not see you.
- Try to stay out of blind spots, especially around large trucks.
- Lane splitting is not prohibited if done in a safe and prudent manner.

Reducing the number of motorcycle-involved collisions goes beyond training and prevention on the part of the motorcyclists. According to the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, more than half of all fatal motorcycle collisions involve another vehicle. In addition, SWITRS data indicates on average, more than one quarter of fatal motorcycle-involved collisions occur within an intersection.

The CHP and OTS offer the following tips for driving safely around motorcycles:

- Give motorcycles extra room. A minor rear-end collision involving a motorcycle can have major consequences.
- Look twice for motorcycles. Always check and double check blind spots and mirrors before changing lanes or merging.
- Passenger vehicles should remain extra vigilant when entering or crossing intersections. Nearly one quarter of all fatal collisions in California occur within an intersection.

The mission of the California Highway Patrol is to provide the highest level of Safety, Service, and Security to the people of California.

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