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For more information:
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Drivers Urged to Share the Road with Motorcyclists

There's a change in scenery on North Dakota roads in the spring. As the snow banks disappear, motorcycle riders emerge and hit the streets and highways. Drivers are often not accustomed to seeing motorcycles, so it is important to be aware of their presence and remember safe driving practices.

The North Dakota Department of Transportation reminds motorists that they need to share the road with motorcycles. Motorcyclists are entitled to a full lane of traffic, just like another car or truck. It is important to keep a safe distance from the cycle. Be aware that road hazards or other traffic conditions may cause a cyclist to swerve or stop suddenly. Keeping a safe following distance will help the vehicle driver avoid a crash with a motorcycle.

Intersections are the most common location for motorcycle crashes. Sometimes cycles are difficult to see, depending on the angle of the sun or the amount of traffic. Trees and fences on corners can block an oncoming cycle from the driver's view. Take an extra look when making left hand turns to make sure a motorcyclist isn't coming straight through the intersection. In addition, always check blind spots before turning, changing lanes, or backing up.

Passing a motorcycle should be another time of caution. Since a motorcycle is smaller, passing too closely can blow the cyclist out of control. It can also throw stones or other road debris at the cyclist.

There were 13 fatalities in North Dakota on motorcycles in 2008, triple the number from 2006. Increasing the awareness of motorcyclists on the road is an important traffic safety practice that will help ensure everyone arrives at their destination safely.