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Look Twice for Motorcycles During Riding Season *June – September are big months for injuries and deaths*

Bismarck – June through September are primary months for injuries and deaths in motorcycle crashes, according to the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT). The NDDOT, along with state and local law enforcement, are reminding motorists and motorcyclists to do their part to prevent crashes during summer travel when motorcycle traffic peaks.

Motorists should be extra alert and look twice for motorcyclists on North Dakota roadways. Drivers should be especially cautious when entering an intersection, changing lanes or maneuvering to pass. Passenger vehicles and trucks should also allow more following distance behind a motorcycle. Motorcycles have the same right-of-way as any other vehicle, including the full lane width; do not try to share the lane.

Last year during the months of June through September there were over 139 injuries from motorcycle crashes and six motorcycle fatalities. This is significant considering motorcycles spend less time on the roadways than all other motor vehicles.

“Motorcyclists have very little protection from the two- or three-ton vehicles traveling the same roads. A collision can be deadly for the motorcycle rider—so other drivers need to take extra care to be sure they actively look for motorcycles,” said Karin Mongeon, director of the Safety Division for NDDOT.

“If all motor vehicle operators follow road signs, obey speed limits, stay focused on the road and avoid drinking and driving, many deaths will be prevented,” Mongeon said.

Tips for drivers to prevent a crash with a motorcycle:

- Always signal when changing lanes or merging with traffic.
- If you see a motorcycle with a signal on, always wait to see that the motorcycle is turning before proceeding.
- Check all mirrors and blind spots for motorcycles before changing lanes or merging with traffic, especially at intersections.
- Allow more following distance – three to four seconds –behind a motorcycle. This gives them more time to maneuver or stop in an emergency.
- Never drive distracted or impaired.

CODE FOR THE ROAD

FOLLOW THE RULES. FOLLOW THE LAW.



Motorcyclists can increase their safety by following these steps:

- Wear a DOT-compliant helmet and other protective gear.
- Obey all traffic laws and be properly licensed.
- Use hand and turn signals at every lane change or turn.
- Wear brightly colored clothes and reflective tape to increase visibility.
- Ride in the middle of the lane where you will be more visible to drivers.
- Never ride distracted or impaired.

“We all want to get where we are going safely,” said Mongeon. “You don’t want to get hurt and you don’t want to hurt or kill someone else. Our message is for all drivers and riders: Share the responsibility and respect each other—always share the road.”

More information is available at www.ndcodefortheroad.org/heads-up