



TALKING POINTS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS.

The Montana Department of Transportation encourages you to talk to your local media outlets (newspaper, radio and TV), as well as other local groups, to help increase motorcycle awareness this summer. If possible, ask local retailers, hotels and institutions to post "Watch for Motorcycles" on their reader boards or marquees. More facts and campaign materials will be available at <http://plan2live.mt.gov>. MDT invites you to link these materials to your own sites.



If you hit a motorcycle, no matter who is at fault, you are likely to seriously injure or kill the motorcyclist. Over 80 percent of reported motorcycle crashes result in injury or death, compared to roughly 25 percent for passenger vehicles crashes. Only a small percentage of all motorcycle crashes in Montana—less than 20 percent—result in no injury (2007-2011).



Not all fatal motorcycle crashes are at higher speeds. Local streets were the site of nearly 10 percent of severe injury motorcycle crashes in Montana based on 2006-2010 data.



Since motorcycles have a lower and smaller profile than most vehicles, drivers can overlook a motorcycle. Motorists need to be alert for motorcycles, especially in the summer months. Expect a motorcyclist to be anywhere.



One of the most serious causes of fatal motorcycle crashes happens when a vehicle turns left in front of a motorcycle. These crashes can be prevented if drivers are more careful to check for motorcycles. Is there one coming toward you? Is there one about to pass you? Double check before you turn—and always signal well in advance of your turn.



Intersections are especially dangerous places for motorcyclists. Why? Because drivers of passenger vehicles pull out in front of them. Drivers need to take the time and care to actively search the road for vehicles of all sizes—*before* entering the intersection.



If you are a driver in a vehicle-motorcycle crash and your inattention (or negligence) is found to be the cause of the collision, you could be the subject of a substantial personal injury lawsuit and potential criminal penalties.

WATCH FOR MOTORCYCLES



Because it is smaller than other vehicles, it is difficult to judge the speed at which a motorcycle is traveling. Chances are it is traveling faster than you think it is.



Motorcycles maneuver differently than other vehicles and are more affected by weather, traffic and road conditions. If the rider has to make an abrupt move to evade a collision, that may also result in a crash.



It takes diligence on everyone's part—motorcyclists and motorists—to prevent traffic injuries and deaths.



Give the motorcycle plenty of space. Don't follow too closely—a motorcycle is able to stop more abruptly than a car.



Whether you drive a motorcycle, a passenger car, van or truck, be courteous and respectful. Being courteous and non-aggressive can go a long way to prevent vehicle crashes and injuries.



Always drive sober.

If you are a motorcycle rider, take steps to be safe on Montana roads:

- Take a motorcycle safety course (<http://motorcycle.msun.edu>).
- Make sure you are highly visible; wear reflective clothing and turn on your headlight.
- Wear brightly colored protective gear and a DOT-compliant helmet.
- Strategically use your lane position to see and be seen.
- Stay alert—and slow down as you approach left turns or intersections in anticipation of what the other drivers might do.
- Use turn signals to let other drivers know in advance when you are going to change lanes or make a turn.
- Never ride impaired.