



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Secretary

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IDOT, ISP Urge Motorcyclists to ‘Ride Smart’

As motorcyclists spring into riding season, safety should be first priority

SPRINGFIELD — The first hint of warm, spring weather is here and motorcycle riders are looking to rev up and hit the open road. To ensure rider safety, the Illinois Department of Transportation and Illinois State Police are reminding motorcyclists to “*Ride Smart*” before rolling out on the first ride of the season.

The annual campaign urges riders to take precautionary measures before getting back on their bikes by conducting pre-ride T-CLOCS safety inspections of their equipment and sharpening their skills with a motorcycle training class offered by IDOT.

“Motorcycles are on the road for just part of the year yet account for 15 percent of all traffic fatalities,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “By wearing a helmet, proper safety gear, performing routine safety checks on equipment and increasing skill level by taking an IDOT training course, riders can enjoy the open road while keeping themselves and their passengers protected from harm’s way.”

To ride legal in Illinois, motorcyclists need a valid driver’s license with an M-Class endorsement. Successful graduates (18 and older) of an IDOT training course are issued a completion card that waives the M-Class testing requirement at an Illinois Secretary of State licensing facility.

Riders should protect themselves by wearing personal protective gear on every ride. This includes high-visibility (Hi-Viz) clothing, eye protection, gloves, jackets, pants, boots and a U.S. DOT-approved helmet. Additionally, riders should never drink and ride. Drinking alcohol reduces reaction times, increases fatigue and leads to poor judgment. One-third of all motorcycle fatalities in Illinois involve rider impairment.

“The motorcycle riding season is quickly approaching, which means many riders will be taking to the roadways at the first opportunity,” said ISP Director Leo P. Schmitz. “We strongly recommend all riders attend a motorcycle safety course, wear high visibility clothing, boots, gloves and DOT-approved helmets. *Ride Smart*, and remember, alcohol and motorcycling don’t mix.”

IDOT has offered free motorcycle training to licensed Illinois residents since the Cycle Rider Safety Training Program began in 1976, with more than 400,000 riders of all experience levels learning the basics of how to safely operate a motorcycle. The program is funded by Illinois motorcyclists through a portion of their license and registration fees. For more information, visit StartSeeingMotorcycles.org.