



**STATE SAFETY OFFICE**  
HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD  
330 OLD NISKAYUNA ROAD  
LATHAM, NEW YORK 12110



## SAFETY MESSAGE 20-07

### July is Motorcycle Safety

Motorcycle riders continue to be overrepresented in fatal traffic crashes. Despite the fact that motorcycles make up 3% of all registered vehicles and only 6% of all vehicle miles traveled in the U.S. In 2020 there were 5,172 motorcyclists died nationwide. New York saw 132 fatal accidents with 133 people killed, an increase of 30%. New York City alone accounted for 50 fatal motorcycle accidents occurred, doubling the number from 2019, which is a dramatic increase in deadly motorcycle crashes. To keep everyone safe we urge drivers and motorcyclists to share the road and be alert. The link below will take you to the Safety Office's Motorcycle Safety page. There you will find information on available safety training courses, operator courses, and information on safety checks for your motorcycle.

<http://dmna.ny.gov/safety/?id=cycle>

## Tips for Motorcyclist

- **Protect your head!** Always wear a DOT-approved helmet and eye protection. "Novelty Helmets" are not approved and offer little protection to the rider in a crash. In fact, they are illegal to wear on New York roadways.
- **Always wear high quality riding gear** designed to protect the rider during a fall. This includes over-the-ankle boots, full finger gloves with padding in addition to jackets and pants with armor protection at impact points.
- **Be conspicuous.** Wear high visibility vests, garments with reflector features and accessories to boost your visibility to other drivers.
- **Maintain your motorcycle properly.** Ensure all of your lights and horn are working and both mirrors are adjusted. Make sure your tires are properly inflated and have legal tread depth. Remember, motorcycles maintain a smaller tire contact patch on the roadway when compared to other vehicles. Good traction is a key component to safe handling and braking in normal and adverse situations.

- **Maintain a high level of awareness.** Scan the roadway constantly for dangers and ride alert. If you are tired, take a break and re-energize to boost your concentration.
- **Drive sober.** Never ride impaired by alcohol or drugs and discourage other riders from making a bad choice.
- **Turn left with caution.** Most crashes between cars and motorcycles involve turning left. If you are preparing to cross traffic or turn left, take a second look to make sure it is safe to proceed.
- **SLOW DOWN!** Speed is the number one cause of traffic crashes - PERIOD! Slow down, take your time and maintain control of the motorcycle.
- **Allow adequate space** between you and the vehicle in front of you. Use the "two second" rule as a safety zone.
- **Observe and obey all traffic laws,** signs, and signals.
- **Let other motorists know your intentions.** Signal when you turn with your directional lights or hand signals. Also, flashing your brake light periodically before you stop will alert drivers behind you to be cautious!

## Tips for Other Motorists

- **Watch for motorcycles.** Be aware of motorcycles sharing our roadways during all seasons, but particularly during the spring and summer months when riding is most popular.
- **Yield to motorcycles** — don't make a rash decision and turn quickly in front of an on-coming motorcycle as it may be traveling faster than it appears!
- **Look Twice and Save a Life!** Check your mirrors and blind spots for motorcycles before changing lanes. Also, when negotiating busy intersections, look twice for motorcycles before proceeding safely! They have a smaller frontal area and may be hard to see.
- **Be a responsible driver.** Ensure your vehicle is in safe operating condition and that all of your safety equipment is properly adjusted. Observe and obey all traffic laws, signs, and signals.
- **Stay focused on the road and your surroundings.** Never drive distracted. Don't let cell phones and other activities distract you from your core mission — driving safely!
- **Drive sober.** Never drive impaired by alcohol or drugs and discourage others from doing so. Impaired driving is an indiscriminate killer with no demographic barriers!

To find previously published Safety Messages go to our NYARNG Safety Website:

<http://dmna.ny.gov/safety/>

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