



Dodge County Traffic Safety Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month

[Dodge Co, WI] – The Dodge County Traffic Safety Commission is partnering with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to remind all motorists to *Get Up to Speed on Motorcycles* during Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month this May. Our goal is to bring drivers up to speed on common motorcyclist riding behaviors, and highlights simple things drivers can do to increase the safety of their two-wheeled friends who have very little protection in the event of a multi-vehicle crash.

Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month coincides with May, as the month ushers in warmer weather, and motorcyclists begin to ride more frequently. Unfortunately motorcyclists are about 29 times more likely than passenger vehicle occupants to die in a motor vehicle crash, and are 4 times more likely to be injured. Even the smallest momentary lapse in a vehicle driver’s awareness can result in the death of an unseen motorcyclist.

“We really want to spread the word to vehicle drivers to learn more about interacting with motorcyclists, keep an eye out for motorcyclists, and to always remember to share the road.” said Scott Smith, Dodge County Traffic Safety Coordinator. “Raising awareness of motorcyclist presence and providing information to better understand motorcyclist maneuvers can save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce crashes.”

In 2019, there were 5,014 motorcyclists killed in traffic crashes, a decrease from 2018 (5,038). Motorcyclist deaths accounted for 14% of the total highway fatalities that year.

“Wearing a DOT-compliant helmet is imperative to the safety of our riders,” said Captain Chad Enright, Dodge County Sheriff’s Office and TSC Co-Coordinator. “Just like motorists buckling their seat belts, using a DOT-compliant helmet can drastically increase survival rates in the event of a vehicle crash,” he said. NHTSA data estimates that helmets saved 1,872 motorcyclists’ lives in 2017, and that 749 more lives could have been saved if all motorcyclists had worn their helmets.

Tip for Motorists

Because vehicle drivers control a much larger machine, it is imperative they keep close watch for motorcyclists who may be riding nearby. If you see a motorcycle with a signal on, be careful: motorcycle signals are often non-canceling and the motorcyclist could have forgotten to turn it off. Always ensure that the motorcycle is turning before proceeding.

Tip for Motorcyclists

At the same time, motorcyclists must take extra precautions to guard against drivers who may not see them by wearing bright colors and/or reflective tape, a DOT compliant helmet and other protective gear. All motorcyclists should always obey all traffic laws, be properly licensed, and never ride distracted or impaired.

During the month of May, and throughout the warm weather months, remember to *Get Up to Speed on Motorcycles* and vehicle drivers alike. For more information on motorcycle safety, visit www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/motorcycles.

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