

Motorcycle Safety During National Distracted Driver Awareness Month

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Whether you are riding a winding mountain road or navigating city streets, there are few experiences on the road more exhilarating than riding a motorcycle on a warm summer day. The number of households owning a motorcycle rose by 1.5 million from 2014 to 2018. The US Census Bureau's most recent estimate put the number of United States households with a motorcycle at 126,224,000. We can expect to hear the rumble of motorcycles in each of our communities as the weather begins to warm.

Motorcycling can also be dangerous. In the US, 4,985 motorcyclists were killed in crashes in 2018 alone and motorcyclists are 28 times as likely as passenger car occupants to die in a motor vehicle crash. Unfortunately, approximately 28% of motorcyclists killed were riding under the influence of alcohol. Motorcyclists are overrepresented in traffic-related fatalities, accounting for 14% of all traffic-related fatalities, while representing only 3% of the entire registered motor vehicle fleet. Despite the known safety benefits, only 71% of riders in 2018 reported wearing a DOT-compliant motorcycle helmet.

All states require motorcycle license endorsement to supplement your automobile driver's license. In most states, you will need to pass a written and on-cycle test to obtain this special motorcycle endorsement. Passing these tests are an important step to learning to ride safely. The most recent data available indicates that 29% of motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were riding without a valid motorcycle license.

Wearing the appropriate gear is the single most important safety decision you will make regarding operating your motorcycle. The best hope for preventing a brain injury is a properly fitting helmet that meets the US Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 218. In 2017 alone, motorcycle helmets saved an estimated 1,872 lives. Look for the DOT symbol on the outside back of the helmet. Ideally, riders and passengers should be completely covered in leather or heavy denim, gloves, and boots that cover your ankles. There has been an increase in high-visibility gear that is bright and reflective to make you more visible to other vehicle drivers.

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY DURING NATIONAL DISTRACTED DRIVER AWARENESS MONTH

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration's (NHTSA) is a valuable resource for motorcycle safety. The NHTSA reminds that riders must obey traffic lights, signs, speed limits, and always leave plenty of room between the motorcycle and other vehicles. In other words, motorcyclists are encouraged to ride defensively.

Please be mindful that most multi-vehicle motorcycle crashes occur because the operator of the vehicle did not see the motorcycle. Motorcyclists must remain cognizant of the difficulty drivers have seeing their bikes, proceed cautiously at intersections, increase visibility with reflective materials, and use their headlight both day and night.

Bailey Glasser was founded in Charleston, West Virginia and has since grown to have offices in eleven states and the District of Columbia. The motorcycle injury attorneys at Bailey Glasser are known for bringing a trial-based approach to litigation to vigorously protect the interests of our clients. If you or a loved one has suffered an injury while operating a motorcycle, please contact us for a free initial consultation of your case.

Attorneys

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