

Tourism News



May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month

POUGHKEEPSIE, NY— May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month. The Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board (DCTSB), in partnership with the NYS Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee, and State, County, and local law enforcement, remind motorists to be aware of motorcyclists and to “share the road” to reduce accidents involving motorcycles. With more motorcycles on the road during the warm weather, it is important for all motorists to exercise caution.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a substantial number of motorcyclists have lost their lives in traffic accidents. In 2013, 4,381 motorcyclists were killed nationally as the result of an accident. Motorcyclists are also 39 times more likely than those riding in a passenger car to die in a crash. Despite the fact that motorcyclists are at a substantially increased risk of being involved in an accident, in 2013, use of DOT-compliant helmets amongst motorcyclists stood at only 60%.

“With the warmer weather here, this is the perfect time to highlight motorcycle safety,” said DCTSB Administrator William C. Johnson. “We have continued to see a large number of fatal crashes, coupled with a decline in proper helmet usage. In Dutchess County, it is our responsibility to make our roads safer by observing basic safety rules. By doing the little things, such as being careful and cognizant of our fellow motorists or wearing the proper safety equipment, we can reduce the amount of needless tragedies we all too often see as a result of motorcycle crashes.”



More information about Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month is available by [clicking here](#).

Motorcycle Safety Foundation Program Manager Ben Zadronzy said there are a number of training courses available that will help motorcyclists learn safe practices. “Through the New York State Motorcycle Safety Program, the Motorcycle Safety Foundation offers training courses to match a variety of skill levels and rider experience,” Zadronzy said. “Whether you are new to motorcycling or have been riding for years, training is an essential part of being safe on the road. The best place for a new rider to start, once they’ve made the decision to ride, is completing a Basic Rider Course. Upon successful completion of the Basic Rider Course, you will receive a motorcycle road test waiver. It is the ‘Fast Track’ to obtaining a motorcycle license, and will give you the satisfaction of knowing you have gone the extra mile to develop your own safe riding techniques.”

The following are tips for drivers to help keep motorcyclists safe on the roadways:

- Always allow a motorcyclist the full lane width – never try to share a lane.
- Perform a visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or exiting a lane of traffic, and at intersections.
- Always signal your intentions before changing lanes or merging with traffic
- Allow more following distance—three or four seconds—when behind a motorcycle so the motorcyclist has enough time to maneuver or stop in an emergency.
- Never tailgate. In dry conditions, motorcycles can stop more quickly than cars.
- Never drive while distracted.

Motorcyclists can increase their safety by:

- Avoiding riding in poor weather conditions.
- Wearing brightly colored protective gear and a DOT-complaint helmet.
- Using turn signals for every turn or lane change, even if the rider thinks no one will see it.
- Combining hand signals and turn signals to draw more attention to themselves.
- Using reflective tape and stickers to increase conspicuity.
- Positioning themselves in the lane where they will be most visible to other drivers.
- Never driving while impaired.

More information can be found by visiting the DMV's Web site at www.dmv.ny.gov, the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee Web site at www.safeny.ny.gov, or the New York State Motorcycle Safety Program Web site at www.nysmsp.org.

www.dutchessNY.gov