



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Deadly Motorcycle Crashes Increased Again In 2023

OLYMPIA, WA — May is National Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, and officials are raising awareness that fatal motorcycle crashes continue to increase in Washington. As the weather gets warmer and the roads get drier, the Department of Licensing (DOL) and Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) are reminding drivers of all motor vehicles, including cars, trucks, and motorcycles, to safely share the road.

In each of the three years from 2020-2022, there were an average of 107 motorcyclist fatalities each year on Washington's roads. This was a significant increase over the previous three years from 2017-2019, when an average of 85 motorcyclists died each year.

In 2022 alone, there were 133 motorcycle rider fatalities in Washington. Preliminary 2023 data shows 137 motorcyclist fatalities, the most Washington has experienced in a single year.

"We are in a public health crisis on our roads, and the increasing number of serious motorcycle crashes is very concerning," said Mark Medalen, Motorcycle Safety Program Manager at the Washington Traffic Safety Commission. "Safety is proactive and responsibility is shared. Deaths and serious injuries on our roads are unacceptable."

The majority of riders involved in motorcycle crashes were found to have taken specific actions that contributed to the crash. Illegal and dangerous actions by the rider including speeding, losing control in corners and curves, improper passing, and riding under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs were the main contributing factors cited in these crashes.

"The Department of Licensing is committed to working with riders, training providers, and other agencies to improve rider safety in Washington," said Robert Willis, Washington State Motorcycle Safety Program Manager. "We know that a trained rider is a safer rider and we encourage motorcyclists to enhance their skills to enhance their ride."

With more motorcycle riders on our roads this time of year, drivers should remember to watch out for motorcycles. Before you change lanes, before you turn left, before you pull out into moving traffic, look twice for motorcycles. Always check your blind spots, learn to search for and recognize motorcycles, humanize motorcyclists, provide plenty of following distance, and practice space management around motorcycles.

Visit <https://www.ridesaferideon.com/> and <https://dol.wa.gov/driver-licenses-and-permits/motorcycle-endorsements> for more rider education, testing, training, endorsement, and safety information.

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