



LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE

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“Watch for Motorcycles” message will keep rolling

Bob Courtney suspects people are rolling their eyes at his message.

But as president of the Louisiana Motorcycle Awareness Campaign, Courtney isn’t going to stop. Instead, he’s revving up MAC’s mantra of “Watch for Motorcycles.”

“I know motorists get tired of hearing us talk about ‘watch for us, watch for us, watch for us,’” Courtney said in a recent interview on the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission’s Safety Minute video series on Facebook. “But, we can’t stop saying it because people are dying out there.”

May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, but as Courtney said, “every month, for MAC, is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.”

Courtney’s admonition to “watch for us” is well-founded. Because motorcyclists have a thin vertical profile compared to cars and trucks, they can be easily missed by a vehicle driver who is only casually glancing in a side-view mirror. That situation is exacerbated if the driver is holding something in front of their face – such as a cell phone.

“My pen, in front of my face right now,” Courtney said, “looking out the window of my car would completely block my vision of a motorcycle, only about 100 feet away from me.”

In 2019, 87 people were killed, and 1,106 people were injured in motorcycle crashes in Louisiana, according to data from the Center for Analytics and Research in Transportation Safety at LSU. The fatalities represent a 10 percent increase over 2018.

One outcome of the worldwide pandemic was an increase in motorcycle sales, with U.S. sales increasing by more than 30 percent. More motorcycles mean more chances for crashes.

“As car drivers, we have to be aware that a motorcycle could be close to us in traffic, even if we don’t see one in our peripheral vision,” LHSC Executive Director Lisa Freeman said. “As we get closer to summer, more motorcycles are going to be on the road, so our motorcycle antennae have to be up.”

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