



LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE
May 21, 2018

LHSC reminds drivers that motorcycles are on the road, too

Baton Rouge – As summer weather has arrived early and more motorcycles are on the road, the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission is reminding all drivers to be alert to motorcyclists and to share the road with motorcyclists, since they are significantly overrepresented in traffic crashes and fatalities.

May is Motorcycle Awareness Month, and LHSC Executive Director Lisa Freeman noted that motorcycle driver fatalities in the state have risen slightly since 2014. Statistics from the Highway Safety Research Group at LSU show that 88 motorcycle drivers were killed in crashes on Louisiana roads in 2016, the most since 101 were killed in 2009. That number dipped to 81 in 2014 but rose to 87 in 2015. Statistics from 2017 are still being verified, but preliminary statistics show the number of motorcycle deaths may still be on the rise.

"Sometimes, it's not as easy to see a motorcycle in traffic, and drivers of cars, trucks and SUVs have to be vigilant not to cross into the path of a motorcycle, especially at intersections," Freeman said.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, motorcyclists accounted for nearly 14 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2015, but motorcycles comprise only 3 percent of all registered vehicles in the United States. A motorcyclist is 27 times more likely than a passenger vehicle occupant to die in a crash, according to NHTSA.

Motorcycling is popular in Louisiana, but motorcycle drivers often feel they are virtually invisible to other drivers, according to Bob Courtney, president of Louisiana's Motorcycle Awareness Campaign.

"A common cause of motorcycle crashes is the failure of motorists to detect and recognize motorcycles in traffic," Courtney said. "It's heartbreaking how often we hear a car or truck driver say, 'That motorcycle came out of nowhere.' Often, it's just a matter of being aware that motorcyclists are sharing the road with larger vehicles."

For more information on how to raise awareness of motorcycle safety in Louisiana, please visit the Motorcycle Awareness Campaign at <https://www.macorg.com>.

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