



Maine DOT Flash Facts

Topic: Motorcycle Safety

Fatalities on motorcycles has increased. From 1999 through 2002, Maine experienced an average of 15 motorcycle crash fatalities a year. BUT, there has recently been a sharp increase in fatalities, with 25 occurring in 2003 and 23 in 2004.

Flash Facts:

Spring is finally here, and that means motorcyclists are now out on the roads. Approximately 500 motorcycle crashes occur in Maine each year with 26 fatalities occurring in 2003 and 23 in 2004. Here are the leading types of motorcycle crashes:

- 30% of motorcycle crashes occur at intersections. Remember, motorcyclists are difficult to spot, especially at intersections.
 - 30% of motorcycle crashes are run off the road type, resulting in almost 40% of the fatalities.
 - 20% of motorcycle crashes are rear-end collisions. Inattention and Following Too Close are the two leading factors for both the motorcycle operator and the other vehicle driver. All drivers must avoid distractions and maintain a safe following distance.
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Flash Facts:

Motorcyclists enjoy the great open feel of the road. Motorcyclists share the road with all other vehicle types. Their smaller size with no external protective shell makes the operators **very vulnerable**.

In 2004:

- The leading age group for motorcycle fatalities is 45 to 54 years old, followed closely by 35 to 44; 16-24; AND 65+ year old operators.
- Speed was a factor in about one third of the fatal crashes
- Alcohol or drugs was a factor for the motorcyclist in 8 fatal crashes, with 4 operators having a blood alcohol content greater than 0.08%.



- 50% of Maine motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were not wearing helmets while riding:
 - ✓ Those not wearing helmets are three times more likely to have a head injury.
 - ✓ Injured helmet users stayed in the hospital less than half the time as those not wearing a helmet.
 - More than 20% of injured motorcycle riders required hospitalization.
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Flash Facts:

About 500 motorcycle crashes occur in Maine each year. Why do these crashes occur? Like other vehicle crashes, most motorcycle crashes are preventable. Leading factors that contribute to motorcycle crashes are:

- Illegal/Unsafe Speed is a factor in about 20% of the collisions, and result in about one third of the fatalities.
- Driver Inattention and Distraction is a lead factor in another 22% of crashes. Pay full attention to the driving task.

Driver inexperience is a factor for 17% of the motorcyclists involved in crashes –drive within your capabilities.

Be a Road Model: wear a helmet when riding a motorcycle