

Motorcycle Helmet Usage in Illinois

June 2017 Observational Survey Results

Survey Design

The recent motorcycle helmet survey was a statistical (multi-stage random) observational survey conducted statewide during June 2017 on both high volume state highways and low volume local roads and residential streets. The survey design was based on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's requirements and had two characteristics.

1. The survey was conducted between 7:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. when the light was adequate for observation.
2. The survey sites included interstate highways, freeways, county roads, state highways and a random sample of residential streets within selected areas.

There were 1,692 operators and passengers of motorcycles observed at 288 locations statewide. The survey provided a statistically representative sample of the state as a whole. For more information on survey design, refer to "Seat Belt Use Survey Design for State of Illinois: Sampling, Data Collection and Estimation Plan", Division of Transportation Safety, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), March, 2012.

Summary of Findings

Results of the motorcycle survey conducted at 288 sites in June 2016 are summarized in **Table 1**. Column **(1)** shows the total number of motorcycle operators and passengers observed. Column **(2)** shows the percentage of motorcycle riders who were observed using helmets. The categories listed on the left side of the table indicate the region where each survey was conducted (with the number of survey sites for each region in parentheses), road type, and day of week.

A total of 1,692 motorcycle riders were observed. Of those, 44.6 percent were observed wearing helmets. The city of Chicago had the highest usage rate at 51.1 percent. Cook County had the second highest helmet usage at 49.3 percent. The Collar Counties (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, & Will) had the third highest usage rate at 47.1 percent. The

Downstate Counties (Champaign, Macon, Montgomery, Peoria, Rock Island, & St. Clair) had the lowest usage rate at 39.9 percent.

Based on road type, motorcycle helmet use was the highest on Interstate Highways at 50.4 percent. Helmet use on U.S./Illinois Highways was 40.9 percent. Helmet use on residential roads was 38.8 percent. The helmet usage rate was 47.1 percent on the weekdays and on the weekends it was 42.8 percent.

Table 1
Motorcycle Helmet Usage Rates in Illinois
(JUNE 2017)

Selected Characteristics	Total Observed (1)	Actual Usage Rate (2)
Statewide (288)	1,692	44.6%%
Regions		
City of Chicago (35)	137	51.1%
Cook County (63)	306	49.3%
Collar Counties (120)	482	47.1%
Downstate (70)	767	39.9%
Road Type		
Residential (144)	335	38.8%
U.S./Illinois Highways (84)	633	40.9%
Interstate Highways (60)	724	50.4%
Day of Week		
Weekends (112)	995	42.8%
Weekdays (176)	697	47.1%

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