

Motorcycle Helmet Usage in Illinois

June 2006 Observational Survey Results

Survey Design

The recent motorcycle helmet survey was a statistical (multi-stage random) observational survey conducted statewide during June 2006 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 1,135 operators and passengers of motorcycles observed at 258 locations statewide. The survey provided a statistically representative sample of the state as a whole. For more information on survey design, refer to the original report entitled "Design of the New Safety Belt Usage Survey in Illinois", Division of Traffic Safety, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), January 1994.

Summary of Findings

Results of the motorcycle survey conducted at 258 sites in June 2006 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 1,135 motorcycle riders were observed. Of those, 37.6 percent were observed wearing helmets. The City of Chicago had the highest usage rate at 43.6 percent. The Collar Counties (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will) and Cook County had helmet usage rates of 37.9 percent and 37.7 percent respectively. The Downstate Counties

(Champaign, Macon, Montgomery, Peoria, Rock Island, and St.Clair) had the lowest usage rate at 34.9 percent.

Based on road type, motorcycle helmet use was the highest on Interstate highways and U.S./Illinois Highways at 38.8 percent. Helmet usage on residential roads was 36.1 percent. The helmet usage rate was 38.1 percent on the weekends and on the weekdays it was 36.8 percent.

Table 1
Motorcycle Helmet Usage Rates in Illinois
(JUNE 2006)

Selected Characteristics	Total Observed (1)	Actual Usage Rate (2)
Statewide (258)	1,135	37.6%
Regions		
City of Chicago (46)	101	43.6%
Cook County (40)	114	37.7%
Collar Counties (118)	631	37.9%
Downstate (54)	289	34.9%
Road Type		
Residential (190)	490	36.1%
U.S./Illinois Highways (40)	227	38.8%
Interstate Highways (28)	418	38.8%
Day of Week		
Weekends (115)	727	38.1%
Weekdays (143)	408	36.8%

For more information, please contact:
 Illinois Department Transportation
 Division of Traffic safety
 3215 Executive Park Drive
 P.O. Box 19245
 Springfield, Illinois 62794-9245
 (217) 785-1181
 or TTY (217) 524-4875