

Motorcycle Helmet Usage in Illinois

June 2007 Observational Survey Results

Survey Design

The recent motorcycle helmet survey was a statistical (multi-stage random) observational survey conducted statewide during June 2007 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 1,404 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 2007 are summarized in **Table 1**.

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 1,404 motorcycle riders were observed. Of those, 35.5 percent were observed wearing helmets. The Collar Counties (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, & Will) had the highest usage rate at 36.3 percent. The Downstate Counties (Champaign, Macon, Montgomery, Peoria, Rock Island, & St.Clair) had the second highest usage rate at 35.6

percent. Cook County had a usage rate of 31.2 percent, while the City of Chicago had the lowest usage rate at 29.9 percent.

Based on road type, motorcycle helmet use was the highest on Interstate highways at 36.5 percent. Motorcycle helmet use on U.S./Illinois Highways and residential roads was 34.8 percent and 34.6 percent respectively. The helmet usage rate was 42.9 percent on the weekdays and on the weekends it was 34.0 percent.

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

| Selected Characteristics | Total Observed (1) | Actual Usage Rate (2) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Statewide (258) | 1,404 | 35.5% |
| Regions | | |
| City of Chicago (46) | 67 | 29.9% |
| Cook County (40) | 77 | 31.2% |
| Collar Counties (118) | 841 | 36.3% |
| Downstate (54) | 419 | 35.6% |
| Road Type | | |
| Residential (190) | 459 | 34.6% |
| U.S./Illinois Highways (40) | 351 | 34.8% |
| Interstate Highways (28) | 594 | 36.5% |
| Day of Week | | |
| Weekends (115) | 1,166 | 34.0% |
| Weekdays (143) | 238 | 42.9% |

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