

Motorcycle Helmet Usage in Illinois

June 2008 Observational Survey Results

Survey Design

The recent motorcycle helmet survey was a statistical (multi-stage random) observational survey conducted statewide during June 2008 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 1,318 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 2008 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 1,318 motorcycle riders were observed. Of those, 29.5 percent were observed wearing helmets. The City of Chicago had the highest usage rate at 34.9 percent. The Collar Counties (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, & Will) had the second highest usage rate at 30.0 percent. The Downstate Counties (Champaign, Macon, Montgomery, Peoria, Rock

Island, & St.Clair) had a usage rate of 28.8 percent, while Cook County had the lowest usage rate at 19.4 percent.

Based on road type, motorcycle helmet use was the highest on U.S./Illinois Highways at 34.8 percent. Helmet use on Interstate highways was at 31.3 percent, while helmet use on residential roads was at 25.1 percent. The helmet usage rate was 36.1 percent on the weekdays and on the weekends it was 28.0 percent.

Table 1
Motorcycle Helmet Usage Rates in Illinois
(JUNE 2008)

Selected Characteristics	Total Observed (1)	Actual Usage Rate (2)
Statewide (258)	1,318	29.5%
Regions		
City of Chicago (46)	83	34.9%
Cook County (40)	72	19.4%
Collar Counties (118)	920	30.0%
Downstate (54)	243	28.8%
Road Type		
Residential (190)	526	25.1%
U.S./Illinois Highways (40)	256	34.8%
Interstate Highways (28)	536	31.3%
Day of Week		
Weekends (115)	1,077	28.0%
Weekdays (143)	241	36.1%

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