

# Motorcycle Helmet Usage in Illinois

## June 2016 Observational Survey Results

### Survey Design

The recent motorcycle helmet survey was a statistical (multi-stage random) observational survey conducted statewide during June 2016 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 1,442 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 1,442 motorcycle riders were observed. Of those, 41.1 percent were observed wearing helmets. The Collar Counties (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, & Will) had the highest usage rate at 47.7 percent. Cook County had the second highest helmet usage at 42.0 percent. The Downstate Counties (Champaign, Macon, Montgomery, Peoria, Rock

Island, & St. Clair) had the third highest usage rate at 34.5 percent. Finally, the city of Chicago had the lowest usage rate at 33.3 percent.

Based on road type, motorcycle helmet use was the highest on Interstate Highways at 45.6 percent. Helmet use on residential roads was 38.3 percent. Helmet use on U.S./Illinois Highways was 36.0 percent. The helmet usage rate was 44.9 percent on the weekdays and on the weekends it was 38.4 percent.

**Table 1**  
**Motorcycle Helmet Usage Rates in Illinois**  
**(JUNE 2016)**

Selected Characteristics	Total Observed (1)	Actual Usage Rate (2)
<b>Statewide (288)</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>41.1%</b>
<b>Regions</b>		
City of Chicago (35)	60	33.3%
Cook County (63)	262	42.0%
Collar Counties (120)	572	47.7%
Downstate (70)	548	34.5%
<b>Road Type</b>		
Residential (144)	326	38.3%
U.S./Illinois Highways (84)	439	36.0%
Interstate Highways (60)	677	45.6%
<b>Day of Week</b>		
Weekends (112)	861	38.4%
Weekdays (176)	581	44.9%

For more information, please contact:

Illinois Department of Transportation  
Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering  
Evaluation Unit  
2300 North Dirksen Parkway  
Springfield, Illinois 62764  
(217) 782-3568  
or TTY (217) 524-4875