

Ride safe.



Drive aware.

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Governor's Office of Highway Safety and Partners Launch New Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Campaign

During 2005, 150 motorcyclists were killed in Arizona, a 26 percent increase from the previous year. In an effort to reduce these fatalities and serious injuries, Governor Janet Napolitano, the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, the Arizona Motorcycle Safety Advisory Council, and Arizona motorcycle riders have banded together to launch a new advertising campaign designed to spotlight rider safety as well as raise awareness among drivers.

"The theme of the new ad campaign is "Ride Safe. Drive Aware," said Sheila Robinson, the Motorcycle Program Coordinator for Pima County Community College and Chairperson of the Arizona Motorcycle Safety Advisory Council. "By addressing both bikers and drivers, we hope to raise driver awareness and reduce the number of crashes involving motorcycles on our roads."

As gasoline prices have risen, motorcycle sales have taken off. Consequently, motorcycle fatalities have risen sharply in Arizona, with much of the blame placed on inattentive car and truck drivers who simply fail to look for or notice motorcycles until it's too late. As a state without a mandatory helmet law (except for riders under the age of 18), it is imperative that riders take proper precautions before going out on the road.

"The number of motorcyclists in Arizona has nearly doubled over the past six years, so it's critical for riders to get trained, gear up and ride straight," stated Robinson. "Many get back into the sport after a 20-year hiatus, and not only is there more traffic, but bikes are bigger and more powerful than the ones they rode in the past. The fact that half of all motorcycle crashes are single vehicle

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crashes points to a lack of training. Like one of our billboards says, "If you can afford the bike, you can afford the lessons."

"Alcohol use is also a key factor in crashes. Using any alcohol while riding makes motorcyclists five times more likely to crash," added Richard Fimbres, Director of the Governor's Office of Highway Safety. "Studies by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation show that nearly 50% of riders in fatal crashes have some alcohol in their systems, whether the crash is their fault or not. That's an astonishing statistic that simply has to be reduced."

In fact, while motorcycles account for only two percent of the vehicles on the road, they are involved in more than 10 percent of all crashes, and motorcycle fatalities have more than doubled over the past decade. Riders now account for more than 4,500 highway deaths and 78,000 injuries per year, and that growth rate shows no signs of slowing. These sobering statistics spurred a federal government grant to all states to fund motorcycle safety and awareness.

Bozell, an advertising and marketing firm, worked directly with the Advisory Council to create the new awareness and safety campaign, which features billboards and posters around the City of Phoenix, as well as in Tucson, Prescott and Flagstaff. Radio spots targeted directly at drivers will back up the outdoor messages. Additional outdoor posters will be placed targeting the Hispanic market, and safety posters will be displayed/distributed through training classrooms and at motorcycle events.

"Getting trained, wearing protective riding gear and avoiding alcohol when riding are ways motorcyclists can protect themselves on the road," Robinson continued. "But it's critical that drivers make an effort to look out for motorcycles. As our radio spots targeted at drivers point out, it would be a shame to meet by accident."

"We're very pleased to have this timely subject spotlighted," Fimbres concluded. "Through this increased awareness campaign, we sincerely hope to see fewer motorcyclists becoming statistics."

For more information about motorcycle safety and awareness, call 800-446-9227 or visit www.azgohs.gov or www.msf-usa.org.