

2015 FATAL CRASHES INVOLVING MOTORCYCLES



QUICK FACTS

General Facts

- Motorcycle includes: motorcycle, moped (motorized bicycle), three-wheel motorcycle or moped – not ATV, off-road motorcycle (two-wheel), other motored cycle type (mini-bike, motor scooter, pocket motorcycle “pocket bike”), and unknown motored cycle types. This does not include Autocycles (see Autocycles on page 4).
- In 2015, there were 144 fatal crashes involving motorcycles that occurred on Illinois public roadways (up 24% from 2014), resulting in the deaths of 147 motorcycle operators and passengers (up 25% from 2014).
- The 144 fatal crashes involving motorcycles accounted for 16% of all fatal motor vehicle crashes occurring on Illinois public roadways in 2015. The 147 motorcyclists killed accounted for 15% of all motor vehicle fatalities in 2015.

Age and Gender of Motorcyclists Killed

- Of the 147 motorcyclists killed, 26% were less than 30 years of age; 38% were age 30-49; and 36% were age 50 or older. The 50-54 age group had the highest number of motorcyclist fatalities with 23 (16%).

Motorcyclists Killed by Age and Person Type			
Age	Operators	Passengers	Total
19 or younger	7	0	7
20-24	12	2	14
25-29	15	2	17
30-34	10	1	11
35-39	15	1	16
40-44	14	1	15
45-49	11	3	14
50-54	22	1	23
55-59	13	0	13
60-69	12	0	12
70 or older	5	0	5
Total	136	11	147

- The average age of all motorcyclist fatalities in 2015 was 42. The youngest was age 13, and the oldest was age 85.
- Of the 147 motorcyclists killed, 136 were operators (132 male and four female); and 11 were passengers (all female).

Helmet Usage

- Of the 147 motorcyclists killed in 2015, 71% were not wearing a helmet, less than 1% wore a DOT-compliant helmet, 27% wore a helmet unknown if DOT-compliant, and less than 1% were unknown or not reported if a helmet was worn.

Motorcycle Operator's License

- 79% of the 136 motorcycle operators killed in 2015 were licensed to operate a motorcycle.

When Motorcyclists Are Killed

- Generally, the hours of 6:00 p.m. on Friday through 11:59 p.m. on Sunday are deadlier for motorcyclists than other periods of the week. In 2015, 74 (51%) of the 144 fatal crashes involving motorcycles occurred during this timeframe.

Fatal Crashes Involving Motorcycles by Time of Day and Day of Week								
Time of Day	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total
Midnight- 2:59am	5	1	1	1	2	2	1	13
3:00am-5:59am	1	0	0	3	1	0	1	6
6:00am-8:59am	0	0	1	1	3	1	0	6
9:00am-11:59am	2	0	0	1	0	1	2	6
Noon-2:59pm	2	4	1	1	3	2	3	16
3:00pm-5:59pm	5	5	3	3	2	5	13	36
6:00pm-8:59pm	9	2	1	3	3	4	10	32
9:00pm-11:59pm	7	6	4	1	2	5	4	29
Total	31	18	11	14	16	20	34	144

- 103 (72%) of the 144 fatal crashes involving motorcycles in 2015 occurred during May - September. Due to an abnormally dry and warm fall, 18 fatal crashes occurred in October, accounting for 13% of the total fatal crashes involving motorcycles.

Fatal Crashes Involving Motorcycles by Month			
January	1	July	23
February	0	August	21
March	4	September	17
April	11	October	18
May	21	November	4
June	21	December	3

Alcohol

- 57 (42%) of the 136 motorcycle operators killed in 2015 tested positive for alcohol. Their BAC results ranged from 0.007 to 0.469, with the average being 0.150. Of the 57 operators killed who tested positive for alcohol, 44 (77%) had a BAC greater than or equal to 0.080. A driver/operator is considered legally impaired if their BAC is .080 or greater.
- Of the 136 motorcycle operators killed, those aged 40-54 had a higher percentage of alcohol-related crash involvement than those in other age groups.

Motorcycle Operator Fatalities by Age - Positive BAC					
Age	Total Operators Killed	Positive BAC 0.001-0.469	Positive BAC Percent of Age Group Killed	Impaired BAC 0.080-0.469	Impaired BAC Percent of Positive BAC
19 or younger	7	3	43%	1	0%
20	3	0	0%	0	0%
21-24	9	3	33%	3	100%
25-29	15	5	33%	4	80%
30-34	10	5	50%	4	80%
35-39	15	5	33%	4	80%
40-44	14	8	57%	5	63%
45-49	11	8	73%	7	88%
50-54	22	14	64%	12	86%
55-59	13	4	31%	3	75%
60-69	12	2	17%	1	50%
70 or older	5	0	0%	0	0%
Total	136	57	42%	44	77%

- 97% of the motorcycle operators killed who tested positive for alcohol were male.
- Of the 144 fatal motorcycle crashes in 2015, 58 (40%) involved at least one motorcycle operator who tested positive for alcohol. 40 (69%) occurred during the weekend between the hours of 6:00 p.m. Friday and 11:59 p.m. Sunday.

Fatal Crashes Involving Motorcycle Operators with Positive BAC by Time of Day and Day of Week								
Time of Day	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total
Midnight- 2:59am	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	6
3:00am-5:59am	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	4
6:00am-8:59am	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
9:00am-11:59am	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Noon-2:59pm	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
3:00pm-5:59pm	1	1	2	0	0	0	8	12
6:00pm-8:59pm	7	0	0	0	2	1	5	15
9:00pm-11:59pm	4	3	2	0	0	3	4	16
Total	18	4	5	3	5	6	16	58

Locations Where Motorcyclists Were Killed

- In general, more motor vehicle fatalities occur in the more densely populated northeast and southwest areas of the state than in any other region in Illinois. The following counties had at least five motorcyclists killed in 2015:

County	Killed
Cook	30
Will	9
DuPage	8
Lake	8
Madison	6
St. Clair	6
Franklin	5
Macon	5

Other Factors

- Weather and roadway surface condition are generally not factors in fatal crashes involving motorcycles. In 2015, 93% of fatal motorcycle crashes occurred in clear weather, and on dry pavement.
- In addition to alcohol use, the driver-related factors reported most frequently in 2015 for fatal motorcycle crashes were:
 - None (48)
 - Operating the Vehicle in an Erratic, Reckless or Negligent Manner, Operating at Erratic or Suddenly Changing Speeds (13)
 - Improper Lane Usage (12)
 - Unknown (12)
 - Operator Inexperience (10)
 - Driver Has Not Complied with Physical or Other Imposed Restrictions (not including CDL Restrictions) (9)

Autocycles

January 1, 2016 - IDOT started collecting crash data involving motor vehicles classified as Autocycles. These vehicles will not be categorized as motorcycles and therefore will not affect crash data as it applies to motorcycles. The Illinois Secretary of State has defined Autocycle as the following:

Public Act 98-0777, effective 1-1-15, established a new category of motor vehicle in Illinois, the "Autocycle." An autocycle is defined as: "A 3-wheel motor vehicle that has a steering wheel and seating that does not require the operator to straddle or sit astride it." The Polaris Slingshot qualifies as an "autocycle."

The Secretary of State will issue distinctive plates for autocycles. The Public Act also states, "No person shall operate an autocycle unless he or she has a valid Class D driver's license." A motorcycle classification is not required to lawfully operate an autocycle.

Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). Alcohol data are actual and should not be confused with NHTSA alcohol data which are imputed.