

Motorcycle Helmet Usage in Illinois

June 2013 Observational Survey Results

Survey Design

The recent motorcycle helmet survey was a statistical (multi-stage random) observational survey conducted statewide during June 2013 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 1,353 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 "Seat Belt Use Survey Design for State of Illinois: Sampling, Data Collection and Estimation Plan", Division of Traffic Safety, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), March, 2012.

Summary of Findings

Results of the motorcycle survey conducted at 288 sites in June 2013 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 1,353 motorcycle riders were observed. Of those, 50.9 percent were observed wearing helmets. The Collar Counties (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, & Will) had the highest usage rate at 55.4 percent. Cook County had the second highest helmet usage at 51.0 percent. The Downstate Counties (Champaign, Macon, Montgomery, Peoria, Rock

Island, & St. Clair) had the third highest usage rate at 46.8 percent. Finally, the city of Chicago had the lowest usage rate at 40.2 percent.

Based on road type, motorcycle helmet use was the highest on Interstate Highways at 58.1 percent. Helmet use on U.S./Illinois Highways was 50.1 percent. Helmet use on residential roads was 34.8 percent. The helmet usage rate was 52.1 percent on the weekends and on the weekdays it was 49.4 percent.

Table 1
Motorcycle Helmet Usage Rates in Illinois
(JUNE 2013)

Selected Characteristics	Total Observed (1)	Actual Usage Rate (2)
Statewide (288)	1,353	50.9%
Regions		
City of Chicago (35)	82	40.2%
Cook County (63)	482	51.0%
Collar Counties (120)	473	55.4%
Downstate (70)	316	46.8%
Road Type		
Residential (144)	246	30.9%
U.S./Illinois Highways (84)	379	50.1%
Interstate Highways (60)	728	58.1%
Day of Week		
Weekends (112)	780	52.1%
Weekdays (176)	573	49.4%

For more information, please contact:
Illinois Department Transportation
Division of Traffic Safety
Evaluation Unit
1340 North 9th St.
Springfield, Illinois 62702
(217) 785-1181
or TTY (217) 524-4875