

Motorcycle Helmet Usage in Illinois

June 2015 Observational Survey Results

Survey Design

The recent motorcycle helmet survey was a statistical (multi-stage random) observational survey conducted statewide during June 2015 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 1,136 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 2015 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 1,136 motorcycle riders were observed. Of those, 45.5 percent were observed wearing helmets. The Collar Counties (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, & Will) had the highest usage rate at 47.6 percent. Cook County had the second highest helmet usage at 46.9 percent. The Downstate Counties (Champaign, Macon, Montgomery, Peoria, Rock

Island, & St. Clair) had the third highest usage rate at 43.2 percent. Finally, the city of Chicago had the lowest usage rate at 41.5 percent.

Based on road type, motorcycle helmet use was the highest on Interstate Highways at 61.6 percent. Helmet use on U.S./Illinois Highways was 39.9 percent. Helmet use on residential roads was 36.0 percent. The helmet usage rate was 47.0 percent on the weekends and on the weekdays it was 44.2 percent.

Table 1
Motorcycle Helmet Usage Rates in Illinois
(JUNE 2015)

Selected Characteristics	Total Observed (1)	Actual Usage Rate (2)
Statewide (288)	1,136	45.5%
Regions		
City of Chicago (35)	82	41.5%
Cook County (63)	211	46.9%
Collar Counties (120)	454	47.6%
Downstate (70)	389	43.2%
Road Type		
Residential (144)	286	36.0%
U.S./Illinois Highways (84)	504	39.9%
Interstate Highways (60)	346	61.6%
Day of Week		
Weekends (112)	536	47.0%
Weekdays (176)	600	44.2%

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