
TxDOT's four goals: Maintain a safe system, address congestion, connect Texas communities, and be a Best-in-Class state agency

Motorcycle Safety — Key Messages

- **As Texas roadways become more crowded, it's critical we pay extra close attention and look for motorcycles.**
 - In 2012, 460 people in Texas died in motorcycle crashes. That's down from the 488 motorcyclists who died in 2011.
 - The lives saved from 2011 to 2012 represent a 6.1-percent drop in motorcycle fatalities.
 - In half of the fatal motorcycle crashes in Texas, the other vehicle driver never saw the motorcycle or its rider. (Texas A&M Transportation Institute, TTI)

- **TxDOT uses the *Share the Road* campaign to ask drivers to:**
 - Look twice for motorcycles.
 - Keep checking your mirrors, and make sure to signal.
 - Give motorcycles space.
 - Anticipate next steps: Obstructions that aren't a problem for drivers can be deadly for motorcyclists. Allow motorcyclists plenty of space for motorcyclists to react.

- **May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month**
 - In 2012, nearly 9 out of 10 (89 percent) motorcycle crashes resulted in the death or injury of the motorcyclist.
 - In 2012, more than half (53 percent) of motorcyclists killed were not wearing helmets.
 - In 2012, Texas motorcycle deaths were higher in urban areas than rural ones. In fact, more than half of the people who died in motorcycle crashes were in cities. (56 percent of motorcyclists who lost their lives were riding in cities while 44 percent died in rural areas.)

Media Q&A

The following Q&A responses can be used by campaign spokespeople. These are intended to address questions about the campaign. Spokespeople will also draw from the messaging above.

Q: What is *Share the Road*?

A: Share the Road is TxDOT's campaign to save the lives of motorcycle riders by reminding drivers of other vehicles to double-check mirrors and blind spots, and to use turn signals when changing lanes. Also, TxDOT wants to remind drivers to give motorcyclists space.

Q: Why focus on other drivers instead of the people riding motorcycles?

A: In more than half of motorcycle crashes, the driver of another vehicle claims to have never seen the motorcycle (according to a survey conducted by Texas A&M Transportation Institute, TTI). Also, training programs and safety campaigns specifically directed at motorcycle riders already exist, so it is our goal to raise the awareness of other vehicle drivers to help increase the odds of safety on the roadways.

Q: What do you attribute to the decrease in motorcycle fatalities?

A: There are a number of variables at play, but we do believe driver education is a key part of the increase in safety. Through the *Share the Road* campaign and other safe-driving campaigns, we constantly remind drivers to drive safely.

Q: Aren't there helmet laws in Texas?

A: Riders under the age of 21 are required to wear helmets. Wearing a helmet is extremely important, and so is getting other vehicle drivers to *Share the Road* with motorcycles — to pay special attention at intersections, when changing lanes and when entering and exiting highways.

Q: Does TxDOT think there should be a required helmet law for all motorcyclists?

A: That's a better question for our Legislators. At TxDOT, safety is our No. 1 priority and we will continue to educate drivers on how to share the road safely. We believe our outreach does make a difference in saving lives. [IF PRESSED: Ultimately, drivers hold the key to driving safely, so we will continue to empower drivers with the knowledge to make safe driving choices.]

Q: What is a safe following distance between a car and motorcycle?

A: Drivers should leave three to four seconds between their vehicle and the motorcycle in front of them. Choose a fixed point like a road sign or a building. Start counting when the motorcycle passes that point. If you reach this same fixed point before you can count to four, then you are driving too close. Also, if the road is wet, curvy or has limited visibility, drop back and increase the distance between yourself and the motorcycle.

Q: What is the cost of the campaign?

A: \$410,000 – Funded by federal grant money -.