

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor Wolf Proclaims May Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month

Harrisburg, PA (May 3, 2016)

With both temperatures and the number of motorcycles appearing on Pennsylvania roadways rising, Governor Tom Wolf has signed a proclamation commemorating May as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.

“As more and more people enjoy the fun and excitement of motorcycling, we want to remind both motorcyclists and motorists to share the road safely,” said PennDOT Secretary Leslie S. Richards. “Staying aware while driving or riding, obeying speed limits and being responsible will help keep fatalities and injuries as low as possible.”

There were more than 3,400 crashes involving motorcycles on Pennsylvania roadways in 2015, resulting in 179 fatalities. Although crashes rose by 139 from the 2014 number of 3,284, fatalities took a dip from 186 in 2014 to a 10-year low of 179 in 2015.

Some safety tips motorists can keep in mind when sharing the road with motorcycles include:

- Watch for Motorcycles: be aware that motorcycles are small and may be difficult to see. Check mirrors and blind spots before changing lanes and at intersections.
- Allow more following distance: leave at least four seconds when following a motorcycle.
- Always signal your intentions before changing lanes or merging with traffic.
- Respect a motorcycle as a full-size vehicle with the same rights and privileges as any vehicle on the roadway. Allow a motorcyclist a full lane width as the motorcyclist needs the room to maneuver safely in all types of road conditions.
- Never drive impaired.

Motorcyclists can do their part to help avoid crashes by following some simple safety tips:

- Be seen by wearing reflective clothing and put reflective tape on your protective clothing and motorcycle. Also wear face or eye protection and a DOT-approved helmet.
- Use common sense by riding sober, obeying all speed limits and allowing enough time to react to potentially dangerous situations.
- Know your motorcycle and conduct a pre-ride check.
- Practice safe riding techniques and know how to handle your motorcycle in adverse road and weather conditions.

Another factor contributing to motorcycle safety is proper training. To ensure that only properly licensed riders are operating on Pennsylvania roadways, under Act 126 of 2013, after

securing their first motorcycle learner's permit, people may only reapply for a permit up to three times in a five-year period.

Once the person's motorcycle learner's permit expires, the individual may retake the knowledge test and reapply for a new permit. If a permit holder is unsuccessful in obtaining a motorcycle license after the third permit reapplication, they must wait the entire five years from the initial issuance of the permit to get another one. This law is aimed at preventing the practice of continually extending the permit without retaking the knowledge test or ever taking the skills test and obtaining a motorcycle license.

Additionally, the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program (PAMSP) offers Pennsylvania residents with a motorcycle permit the opportunity to earn a motorcycle license or refresh their skills through the 15-hour Basic Rider Course (BRC). It also offers a variety of training to help develop safe riding skills for all motorcyclists, no matter how experienced or inexperienced the rider. The courses include: the 15-hour Basic Rider Course (BRC); the six-hour Basic Rider Course 2 (BRC2); the eight-hour Advanced Rider Course (ARC); and the 12-hour 3-Wheeled Motorcycle Basic Rider Course (3WBRC). All of these courses are offered free of charge.

For more information on motorcycle rider training or to schedule a course, visit www.pamsp.com or call 1-800-845-9533, Monday through Friday, between noon and 4 p.m.

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