

# Gov. Rauner urges Illinois to “Start Seeing Motorcycles”

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*Annual safety campaign reminds all roadway users to share the road*

**SPRINGFIELD** – Kick-starting the riding season, Gov. Bruce Rauner joined fellow motorcycle enthusiasts and safety advocates today to launch the Illinois Department of Transportation’s (IDOT) latest “Start Seeing Motorcycles” campaign. To call attention to the need for all roadway users to be especially vigilant these next few months, Gov. Rauner has proclaimed May as Motorcycle Awareness Month in Illinois for the 33<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year.

“I ride my motorcycle as often as possible, and many weeks between Chicago and Springfield, so I know the importance of sharing the road,” Gov. Rauner said.

“Everyone needs to do their part. All drivers should be on the lookout for motorcycles at all times, but riders have to be extra cautious. Together, we can make this the safest year ever for motorcycle riders in Illinois.”

Although motorcycles represent about three percent of total vehicle registrations in Illinois, they account for almost 15 percent of all traffic fatalities. There were 998 traffic fatalities in Illinois in 2015, according to preliminary IDOT data. Of those, 146 were motorcyclists, an increase of 28 from the previous year.

Throughout the riding season, “Start Seeing Motorcycles” banners and yard signs will be on display, letting the public know motorcycles are out and they need to stay alert at all times.

All riders are urged to take precautions to ensure they are visible to other motorists by wearing the appropriate protective gear, getting regular maintenance checks and taking advantage of IDOT’s motorcycle safety courses. All other motorists should be checking and rechecking for motorcycles in their immediate vicinity. A motorcycle can easily be hidden behind a car or truck, so it is particularly important to check mirrors and blind spots before merging or changing lanes.

“Over the next several months, we will be continually reminding everyone that warmer weather brings out more motorcycles,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “Please be alert for motorcycles when you travel, especially in urban areas where most motorcycle accidents take place. Remember to look twice – you might save a life.”

“Start Seeing Motorcycles” is made possible by the teamwork between IDOT, the Illinois State Police and motorcycle organizations, such as A Brotherhood Aimed Towards Education (ABATE) and the Gold Wing Road Riders Association, that promote motorcycle education, awareness and safety to the general public as well as their members.

“Motorcycle riders have limited protection and can be seriously injured during a traffic crash. Riders should always wear the appropriate protective gear, have regular maintenance performed on their motorcycles and take advantage of safety courses,” said Illinois State Police Col. Tad Williams. “Be conscious of what’s ahead. Look for other vehicles, potholes, wet roads and other potential hazards. Remember, don’t ride beyond your capabilities. Doing so leaves no margin for error.”

Visit [www.startseeingmotorcycles.org](http://www.startseeingmotorcycles.org) for more information on IDOT's motorcycle safety programs.