



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **GROWING INCIDENCE OF MOTORCYCLE FATALITIES PROMPTS STATE AGENCIES TO ADVISE CAUTION**

LOS ANGELES – With gas prices forcing an increasing number of commuters onto motorcycles, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) advises both motorists and motorcyclists to be extra cautious and conscious of one another on State highways and freeways.

“We have seen a growing incidence of fatalities and serious accidents involving motorcycles,” said Caltrans Director Will Kempton. “Motorcycle drivers must use the utmost caution when driving at high speeds, and drivers of other vehicles must be aware of their presence.”

According to recent California Highway Patrol (CHP) accident statistics, motorcycles were involved in 12,350 collisions, resulting in 429 fatalities, or 10 percent of the total number of people killed on California’s roadways. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that per vehicle miles traveled, motorcyclists are about 35 times more likely than passenger car occupants to die in a traffic collision.

Motorists can help reduce these numbers by remembering that motorcyclists could be sharing their lanes. Following distance should be increased to ensure that a motorcyclist has enough time to maneuver or stop in an emergency. Also, drivers should slow down and watch for clues from motorcyclists, such as glancing over either shoulder, which would indicate that the rider is planning to turn or change lanes.

Motorcyclists can protect their own safety by following the rules of the road, being alert to nearby vehicles and wearing helmets and protective clothing.

“Both motorists and motorcyclists can help create a safer highway environment by staying alert and using common sense and courtesy while on the road,” said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. “We’re all out here together and we must be respectful and mindful of one another.”





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