

Why every state needs to require all-riders to wear a motorcycle helmet

The reasoning for requiring all riders to wear a helmet is clear and straight forward.

- Crashes continue to occur. Traditional countermeasures are not reducing the number of crashes.
- Wearing a helmet is proven effective in reducing the risk of death and injury in the event of a crash.
- When an all-rider head protection requirement is in effect, nearly every rider wears a helmet.

Therefore, fewer riders die in their crashes and fewer suffer the debilitating effects of head injury.

Crashes continue to happen – traditional countermeasures are not working

Rider training, motorist awareness programs and efforts to increasing the number of licensed motorcycle operators are traditional programs implemented to reduce the number of crashes. Sadly, however, there is little or no evidence that these measures have a positive impact. These efforts have not reduced the number of crashes. Therefore, preventing deaths and injuries in the event of a crash and lessening the severity of injuries in the event of a crash become extremely important.

Motorcycle helmets are proven effective

A 2009 Cochrane Group literature review, *Helmets for preventing injury in motorcycle riders* found helmets to reduce the risk of death by 42% and to reduce the risk of head injury by 69%.

Motorcyclist head protection requirements are effective

When an all-rider motorcyclist head-protection requirement is in effect, nearly every rider wears a helmet. When more riders use helmets the costs to family and society resulting from deaths and injuries go down.

Debunking Common Claims Against Motorcycle Helmets and All-Rider Helmet Laws

The truth about what you may have been told!

*Anti-helmet law advocates, who want to repeal all-rider helmet laws so they can have the freedom to feel the wind in their hair, have been known to “bend the truth” about helmets. In order to convince decision makers to repeal a lifesaving, injury reducing and cost preventing law, they haven’t been entirely truthful about the facts. Some of what you may have been told is misleading, some is mere speculation with no basis in fact, and much is outright fabrication completely contrary to the findings of proven, quality research. **Here are the FACTS.***

You may have been told: Helmets cause neck or spinal-cord injuries.

FACT: This is not true.

You may have been told: Helmets are designed to pass laboratory tests and are tested at only 13 MPH.

FACT: This is highly deceptive.

You may have been told: Helmets reduce peripheral vision and prevent the rider from hearing significant traffic noise.

FACT: This is not true.

You may have been told: Riders take more risks when they wear a helmet.

Fact: There is no evidence to support this claim.

For a more complete description of the information and research debunking these and other claims go to:

http://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Debunking_Common_Claims_may_hav-1.pdf

The Skilled Motorcyclist Association – Responsible, Trained and Educated Riders, Inc. (SMARTER) wants motorcycle riders, motorcyclist safety advocates and policy decision makers to make responsible decisions based on factual knowledge and the conclusions of quality research. Our mission is to gather, examine, catalogue, share, post and distribute factual motorcyclist safety information and research and to advocate for decisions to be based on such knowledge.

SMARTER is a 501c3 non-profit organization.
Visit our home page at: www.smarter-usa.org

The statements in this document are based on available data and research. The research supporting the information in this document is available in the RESEARCH - Helmet and Helmet Laws section of our website at:

<http://smarter-usa.org/research/helmets-laws/>

Contact us by e-mail at: smarterusa@gmail.com if you have any questions.



Without Motorcycle Helmets We All Pay the Price

Motorcycle Helmet Laws

Prevent Deaths | Prevent Injuries & Lower Severity | Reduce Costs to Society

The Skilled Motorcyclist Association
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Motorcycle Helmets are EFFECTIVE in Preventing Head and Brain Injuries



Helmets Prevent Head and Brain Injury

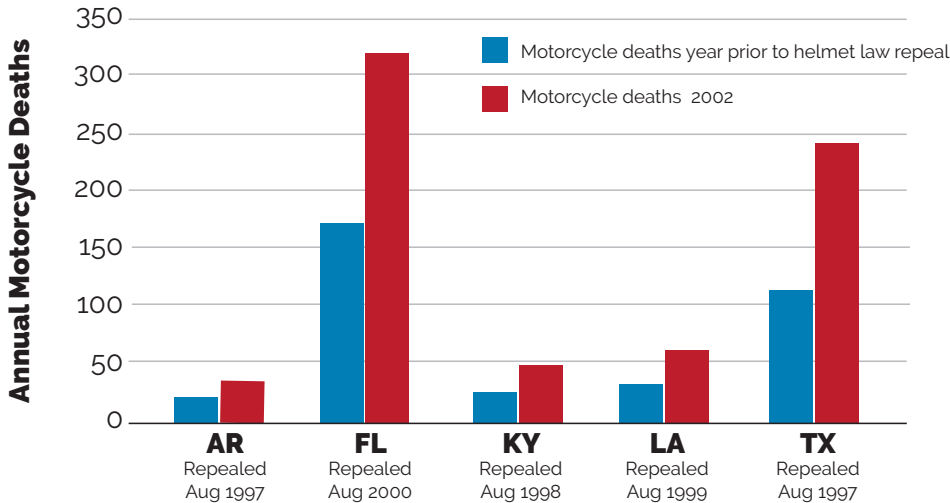
- Motorcycle helmets save lives and prevent devastating and debilitating head injuries.
- All valid research clearly demonstrates the benefit of wearing a helmet.
- Every reputable safety research organization in the world supports the use of helmets as a way to reduce injury, death, and economic costs resulting from brain trauma.

For decades, hundreds of researchers representing distinguished organizations have researched the topic of helmet effectiveness. Meticulous reviews of the literature have concluded that the research clearly demonstrates the lifesaving benefits of wearing a helmet. **That fact is clear!**

Motorcyclists who ride without helmets run a significantly greater risk of death or permanent injury.

Helmet laws are a virtually cost free way to achieve high helmet use. When an all-rider law is repealed and replaced with a law requiring only some riders to wear a helmet, helmet use drops to 50% or lower and many of those who are still required to wear a helmet, do not comply.

All-rider Helmet Laws Prevent and Reduce Injuries and Save Lives



All-rider helmet laws translate into increased helmet usage and increased usage translates into lives saved, fewer injuries and a reduction in the severity of injuries.

This has been proven numerous times through state fatality data that allowed comparison of deaths and injuries before and after helmet laws were enacted.

The most accurate assessment of a state's helmet use law is through the comparison of that state's motorcyclist crash-related fatalities before and after enactment or repeal of a helmet law for all riders.

Reference list of more than 275 research reports:

http://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/hundreds_of_researchers.pdf

Summary of important literature reviews:

http://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ridingSMART_2014_Sept_Oct.pdf

For additional helmet effectiveness research visit:

<http://smarter-usa.org/research/helmets-laws/helmet-effectiveness/>

Reducing Costs to Society

The **monetary costs** associated with motorcycle crashes are a result of the tangible losses from the crash and the value of resources that are used to restore crash victims to their pre-crash physical and financial status.

Motorcycle crashes also result in **nonmonetary quality-of-life costs**. These are costs associated with pain, suffering, and other intangible losses resulting from injury and death.

Comprehensive costs = monetary costs + nonmonetary quality-of-life costs.

Studies consistently find that in the event of a crash, helmet use reduces the fatality rate and the probability and severity of head injuries. The associated length of hospital stay, the necessity for special medical treatments, the probability of long-term disability and all the costs associated with medical treatment are also less for riders who wear a helmet. For victims of serious head injury, acute hospital care might be only the first stage of a long and costly treatment program. And for victims who are permanently disabled, their earnings will likely be reduced for the rest of their lives.

In 2016, nearly **\$3.4 billion in economic costs and \$21 billion in comprehensive costs** were saved by the use of helmets. **An additional \$1.5 billion in economic costs and \$9.2 billion in comprehensive costs** could have been saved if all riders had worn helmets (Lives and Costs Saved by Motorcycle Helmets in 2016)

This research is clear and unless the evidence is simply denied advocates for an "adult choice" helmet law must make the argument that they believe the freedom not to wear a helmet is worth the cost in human lives, disability, and money.

