ARTICLE NO. 13b MOTORCYCLE SAFETY AND AWARENESS

NHTSA HIGHWAY SAFETY MINI-SERIES

REFERENCE SERIES: Transportation in Connecticut

Special thanks are given to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for support of programs described in this mini-series.

NHTSA
www.nhtsa.gov

Overview

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This simple guide is part of a mini-series that provides insight on National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) programs relating to Connecticut's transportation system. The article focuses on the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CT DOT) anticipated initiatives towards **Motorcycle Safety and Awareness**.

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Connecticut...On The Move!

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overview

Oversight of the Motorcycle Safety Program in Connecticut is performed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CT DOT) Highway Safety Office (HSO) on behalf of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The general goal of Connecticut's Motorcycle Safety Program is to reduce the number of injuries and deaths among motorcycle operators and passengers. Providing public information and education materials that promote safety is an important component of the motorcycle safety program.

CT DOT Highway Safety Information Online: www.ct.gov/dot

Navigate to Programs and Services > Travel Resources > Safety

- **Motorcycle riders and passengers are strongly advised to wear protective gear: helmets and eye protection as well as durable jackets, trousers, gloves and footwear.**
- **Visit the NHTSA website (www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/Motorcycles) and review the brochure on "How to Identify Unsafe Motorcycle Helmets:".**

education materials

Education materials include information on training course availability, safe riding gear, alcohol and/or drug impairment, safe riding tips, and motorist awareness of motorcycles as well as the State motorcycle-specific map that incorporates NHTSA motorcycle safety educational information. Connecticut Rider Education Program (CONREP) is also represented and promoted at numerous grassroots events, including venues such as the Hartford Motorcycle Expo.

In addition to being available at Department sponsored events, education materials are distributed to motorcycle organizations and several Connecticut motorcycle dealerships. These organizations have been very helpful in our effort to bring awareness to motorcycle safety.

performance goals

NHTSA funding will be reserved to support efforts to reduce rider impairment fatalities. Performance goals have also been established for this program, including:

- Decreasing the number of un-helmeted fatalities below the five year average of 33 (2004-2008) to 25 by 2012.
- Decrease the number of fatalities below the five year average (2004-2008) of 51 by 10 percent to 46 by 2012.
- Decreasing the percentage of fatally injured motorcycle operators with BACs greater than 0.00 from 39.5 percent in 2008 to 30 percent in 2012.

The Department continually reviews performance measures. Through development of programs, improved data collection practices, and observations of changes in trends, measures may be modified, expanded or may be discontinued. Additionally, national goal areas and State established objectives and targets will be incorporated as necessary.

The Department reports regularly on performance measures. To view the latest performance measures and recorded trends, navigate to the performance measures page from Publications > Other on the Department's website (www.ct.gov/dot).

Did you know?

- Motorcycle helmet use increased from 48% in 2005 to 67% in 2009.
- Motorcycle helmets saved 1,829 motorcyclists' lives in 2008.
- Motorcycle helmets do not interfere with the rider's vision or hearing.

-NHTSA

Open the Throttle. Not the Bottle.

A successful statewide campaign, "Open the Throttle. Not the Bottle," continues to address motorcycle rider impairment and the impact of alcohol, drugs, and fatigue on riding ability. The campaign extends throughout the year with public service announcements and campaign message events at motorcycle gatherings. Funded by a NHTSA grant, the campaign was developed to increase awareness of the dangers of riding impaired, with a focus on fatal injuries, and to encourage safe motorcycle riding practices.

The campaign web site (www.ride4ever.org) contains impaired riding messages and includes downloadable ride maps, digital postcards, and articles. The site showed 26,000+ visits over the course of 2011, with the bulk of them coming in the spring and summer. Partners in this program have included the American Motorcyclists Association and the Connecticut Motorcycle Riders Association.

ct rider education program (CONREP)

The Connecticut Rider Education Program (CONREP) is administered by the CT DOT HSO. CONREP sponsors motorcycle rider safety training at fifteen locations throughout the State. Each location offered the Basic Rider Course (beginner), Intermediate Rider Course, and Experienced Rider Course. A pilot program offering an additional course targeting advanced and sport bike riders who are over represented in State crash data was also hosted in 2011.

Additional certified instructors have been added to the CONREP team to accommodate increasing demand. This program expansion was particularly helpful in accommodating the more than 20% increase in students from the previous year during 2011, which resulted after legislative changes required motorcycle safety training for all new license applicants.

NHTSA funding has been used by CONREP to purchase two Safe Motorcyclist Awareness and Recognition Trainers (SMARTrainer). The SMARTrainer is an advanced, interactive instructional tool with standard motorcycle controls and realistic traffic situations. The SMARTrainer leads a rider through a computer simulated ride designed to develop and apply risk-management and crash avoidance strategies.

CONREP has also used NHTSA funding to purchase over eighty-five fuel injected motorcycles and scooters for use by students for field practice and examination during training courses. The purchase of additional equipment was necessary to keep up with the increasing student demand.

other notes and resources

The information in this article is provided as a first step in understanding the transportation planning, development, design and implementation process. Many topics focus on elements particularly relevant to locally administered transportation projects. The full detail of the process, particularly rules of eligibility, special provisions, requirements, or constraints is not within the purview of this reference document. It is imperative that municipal staff contact their RPO early in the process for guidance.

In addition to the CT DOT website at www.ct.gov/dot, the Local Project Administration website of the University of Connecticut's CTI-Technology Transfer Center provides many resources for municipal staff and managers of local projects: www.t2center.uconn.edu. Other articles in the Reference Series: Transportation in Connecticut are posted at the Department's website and can be located by navigating to Publications > Pamphlets.

Article No. 10, entitled "Performance Measurement and Asset Inventory", may also be of interest. This simple guide focuses on the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CT DOT) initiatives in this arena as well as its vision to move towards performance and asset management. The recent passage of a federal transportation bill and related requirements are also briefly presented.

This simple guide is a product of coordination between:

the Federal Highway Administration, University of Connecticut's CTI-Technology Transfer Center and the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation.

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