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Motorcycle Riders Urged to Take Motorcycle Safety Course

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The number of motorcycle fatalities has tripled in North Dakota since 2006. There were four fatalities in 2006, and thirteen in 2008. Cyclists are encouraged to sign up for motorcycle safety courses at <http://www.ndmsp.com/>.

Resources are Available to Improve Motorcycle Safety North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) officials have noticed a disturbing trend in the state: the number of fatalities on motorcycles has tripled in the past two years. In 2008, there were 13 deaths on motorcycles, up from four in 2006. It is important that motorcycle riders are trained to handle all situations. The NDDOT partners with ABATE to offer motorcycle safety courses called RiderCourses to the public. Information on the courses is available at <http://www.ndmsp.com/>. Linda Butts, Deputy Director of Driver and Vehicle Services at NDDOT states, "The website is an excellent source of safety information for motorcycle riders. We strongly encourage riders to take advantage of the safety course because a majority of the riders report that the classes increase their knowledge and street skills." Motorcyclists should be especially alert at intersections. Approximately seven of every 10 motorcycle crashes occur at intersections. Motorcyclists should also check rearview mirrors before stopping to prevent rear-end crashes. Other safety practices include using headlights day and night, and wearing bright clothing with retro-reflective material at night. Avoid driving in a car's blind spot. Drive at a speed consistent with driving abilities. Another tip stresses the importance of not drinking alcohol or drugs before riding. A slight shift in balance caused by alcohol can mean a serious crash. Finally, when it comes to licensing, any motorcycle type vehicle with an engine 50cc or larger, is required to have a motorcycle license. Approximately 1/3 of the fatalities were not licensed, or were not properly licensed to ride a motorcycle. Butts continues, "North Dakota's highways and byways allow riders a beautiful view of the North Dakota countryside. It is our hope that all motorcycle riders will enjoy riding safely. The classes and website are available to educate and improve their safety on the road."