



St. Lawrence County Traffic Safety Program



Spring-Summer 2018

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Never Text While Driving. It Can Wait!

Make our roads safer and save lives. Be smart and familiarize yourself with the special "Texting Zone" locations along the New York State Thruway and State Highways.

Under New York State law you cannot use a hand-held mobile telephone or portable electronic device while you drive. Illegal activity includes

- holding a portable electronic device and
- talking on a handheld mobile telephone
- composing, sending, reading, accessing, browsing, transmitting, saving, or retrieving electronic data such as e-mail, text messages, or webpages
- viewing, taking, or transmitting images
- playing games

If you use a portable electronic device while you drive (except to call 911 or to contact medical, fire or police personnel about an emergency), you can receive a traffic ticket and be subject to a fine and a surcharge.

Conviction of a cell phone use, portable electronic device use or a texting violation will also result in points being added to your DMV driving record. If you receive 11 points in an 18 month period, your driver license may be suspended. To learn more, see [About the NY State Driver Point System](#).

Source: <https://dmv.ny.gov/tickets/cell-phone-use-texting>



What is Aggressive Driving?

Aggressive driving is the operation of a motor vehicle in an unsafe and hostile manner without regard for others. Aggressive driving behavior may include: making frequent or unsafe lane changes, failing to signal or yield the right of way, tailgating and disregarding traffic controls.

What should you do when confronted by an aggressive driver?

- Stay calm and relaxed.
- Make every attempt to get out of the way safely. Don't escalate the situation.
- Put your pride in the back seat. Do not challenge an aggressive driver by speeding up or attempting to hold your position in your travel lane.
- Wear a seat belt and encourage your passengers to do the same.
- Avoid eye contact.
- Ignore harassing gestures and refrain from returning them.
- Report aggressive drivers to appropriate authorities by providing a vehicle description, location, license plate number and direction of travel.
- If an aggressive driver is involved in a crash, stop a safe distance from the crash scene. When police arrive, report the driving behavior you witnessed.

Remember...

*You can control your reactions to other drivers. If someone drives aggressively, do not retaliate...
Steer Clear of Aggressive Driving.*

Source: New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee
<http://SafeNY.nv.gov>

Motorcycle Safety Tips

The US Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) declares May as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, designed to encourage all vehicle drivers and motorcyclists to "share the road" with each other. In 2016, there were 5,286 motorcyclists killed in traffic crashes, a 5% increase from 2015 (5,029).

Operating a motorcycle takes different skills than driving a car; however, the laws of the road apply to every driver just the same. A combination of consistent education, regard for traffic laws and basic common sense can go a long way in helping reduce the amount of fatalities involved in motorcycle accidents on a yearly basis. It's important to understand some basic motorcycle safety tips to make sure your next ride is a safe one.

Follow these tips for safe riding:

Always wear a helmet with a face shield or protective eye wear.

Wearing a helmet is the best way to protect against severe head injuries. A motorcycle rider not wearing a helmet is five times more likely to sustain a critical head injury.

Wear appropriate gear.

Make sure to wear protective gear and clothing that will minimize the amount of injuries in case of an accident or a skid. Wearing leather clothing, boots with nonskid soles, and gloves can protect your body from severe injuries. Consider attaching reflective tape to your clothing to make it easier for other drivers to see you.

Follow traffic rules.

Obey the speed limit; the faster you go the longer it will take you to stop. Be aware of local traffic laws and rules of the road.

Ride Defensively

Don't assume that a driver can see you, as nearly two-thirds of all motorcycle accidents are caused by a driver violating a rider's right of way. You should always ride with your headlights on; stay out of a driver's blind spot; signal well in advance of any change in direction; and watch for turning vehicles.

Keep your riding skills honed through education.

Complete a formal riding education program, get licensed and take riding courses from time to time to develop riding techniques and to sharpen your street-riding strategies.

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Be awake and ride sober.

Don't drink and ride, you could cause harm to yourself and others. Additionally, fatigue and drowsiness can impair your ability to react, so make sure that you are well rested when you hit the road.

Preparing To Ride

Making sure that your motorcycle is fit for the road is just as important as practicing safe riding. Should something be wrong with your motorcycle, it will be in your best interest to find out prior to hitting the road. To make sure that your motorcycle is in good working order, check the following:

- **Tires:** Check for any cracks or bulges, or signs of wear in the treads (low tire pressure or any defects could cause a blowout)
- **Under the motorcycle:** Look for signs of oil or gas leaks
- **Headlight, taillight and signals:** Test for high and low beams (make sure that all lights are functioning)
- **Hydraulic and Coolant fluids:** Level should be checked weekly

Once you've mounted the motorcycle, complete the following checks:

- **Clutch and throttle:** Make sure they are working smoothly (throttle should snap back when released)
- **Mirrors:** Clean and adjust all mirrors to ensure sharpest viewing
- **Brakes:** Test front and rear brakes (each brake should feel firm and hold the motorcycle still when fully applied)
- **Horn:** Test the horn

Facts/Tips for Motorists

Allow more follow distance – 3 or 4 seconds – when following a motorcycle; this gives the motorcycle rider more time to maneuver or stop in an emergency. Motorcycle riders may suddenly need to change speed or adjust lane position to avoid hazards such as potholes, gravel, wet or slippery surfaces, pavement seams, railroad crossings, and grooved pavement.

Sources:

<https://www.geico.com/information/safety/motorcycle/riding-tips/>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Motorcycle Awareness Talking Points 2018

