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PRESS RELEASE

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Riverside Police Department Working To Improve Motorcycle Safety

Police to increase enforcement aimed at dangerous riders and careless motorists

The Riverside Police Department will be conducting a specialized Motorcycle Safety Enforcement Operation on Friday, August 17, 2012, in an effort to continue lowering deaths and injuries. Extra officers will be on duty patrolling areas frequented by motorcyclists and where motorcycle crashes occur. Officers will be looking for drivers and riders who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol and cracking down on traffic violations made by motorcyclists as well as other vehicle drivers that can lead to motorcycle collisions, injuries and fatalities.

While motorcycle fatalities had been on the rise in California, increasing 175 percent in the last decade, from 204 killed in 1998 to 560 killed in 2008, the trend has changed. In 2009, California experienced a 29.6 percent reduction with 394 motorcyclists killed, and preliminary 2010 numbers indicate another 10 percent drop to 353 motorcyclists killed. In a five year span from 2006 to 2010, the city of Riverside accrued a total of 9 fatalities and 276 injuries from motorcycle crashes.

California collision data reveals that primary causes of motorcycle-involved crashes include speeding, unsafe turning and impairment due to alcohol and other drugs. The Riverside Police Department is also reminding all motorists to always be alert and watch out for motorcycles, especially when turning and changing lanes.

Some of the reduction in riders killed can be attributed to fewer improperly licensed riders. In 2008, 62.7 percent of motorcycle operators killed under age 25 were not properly licensed. In 2009, that statistic fell to only 45.5 percent. Riders, young and old, are encouraged to be properly licensed and to seek training and safety information.

“The terrible trend of rising motorcyclist fatalities has been reversed, though there is more that everyone can do to save more lives. Riders and drivers need to respect each other and share the road,” said California Office of Traffic Safety Director, Christopher J. Murphy.

Riders can get training through the California Motorcyclist Safety Program. Information and training locations are available at www.CA-msp.org or 1-877 RIDE 411 or 1-877-743-3411. Funding for this program is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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