

ALCOHOL & MOTORCYCLE SAFETY



Drinking alcohol and riding a motorcycle is a dangerous combination.

Statistics show that 45% of drivers killed in motorcycle crashes had been drinking. Of that 45% total, 6% had enough alcohol to impair their judgment and riding skills, while a full 38% were legally intoxicated – they had an alcohol concentration (AC) level of .08 or greater.

In Wisconsin, a larger percentage of motorcycle crash victims are young, less likely to use safety equipment, and more likely to be violating licensing or traffic laws than crash victims in other vehicles.

YOU CAN SEE THE AREAS OF HIGH RISK IN THIS BREAKDOWN OF FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CRASH FATALITIES:

Factors in Fatalities (drivers only)	% of Total Cycling Fatalities	% of Total Auto & Light Truck Fatalities
• Age 30 and younger	60%	42%
• No Helmet	94%	N/A
• Speeding	53%	23%
• Violating licensing laws	25%	Unknown
• AC at or above .08	35%	32%
• Under .08	65%	68%

ALCOHOL AFFECTS ALL YOUR VITAL RIDING SKILLS

It affects your ability to:

- Ride and scan the road for hazards at the same time
- Perceive moving objects
- See effectively at night
- Coordinate eye, hand and foot movements
- Maintain balance while maneuvering
- Make good decisions
- React quickly

HERE IS A BASIC GUIDELINE FOR HOW MUCH ALCOHOL IT TAKES TO RAISE YOUR AC COUNT

CAUTION: The following chart is a starting point – it may not be exactly right for you. The amount of alcohol it actually takes to raise your AC to intoxication depends on:

- How much alcohol you consume
- How quickly you consume it
- Your body size

- Your gender
- Your metabolism
- How much and what kinds of food you've eaten
- Whether you're on medication

The following chart demonstrates blood alcohol levels according to weight and number of drinks per hour. It applies to males. The blood alcohol level would be higher in each category for females.

(1-oz. 100 Proof Alcohol, 12-oz. Beer or 5-oz. Wine)

Weight	Number of Drinks in a One-Hour Period								
100	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
120	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
140	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
160	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
180	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
200	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
220	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
240	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	AC to .05	AC .05 to .08	AC .08 & up						

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU AT EACH LEVEL OF RAISED AC

AC to .05

Your attention span is reduced and you react slower than normal. Your reasoning and judgment are not reliable. You feel unrealistically self-confident, and your inhibitions break down.

AC .05 to .08

An AC of .05 or greater is considered relevant evidence of intoxication.

- Chance of getting into a crash is greatly increased.
- Possible arrest and conviction for Operating While Intoxicated (OWI).

AC .08 and above

- An AC of .08 or greater makes it illegal to operate a motorcycle.
- Anybody who tests at .08 or more will lose his or her driver's license immediately.

YOU CAN REDUCE THE IMPACT OF ALCOHOL TO SOME DEGREE

If you choose to drink, drink slowly to slow the absorption rate and eat something with protein. Although it's not foolproof, the "drink an hour" rule can keep most people out of trouble. A "drink" means a 5-ounce glass of wine, a 12-ounce beer or standard drink with one ounce of liquor.

Remember, once you overindulge, only time will make you sober. There are no shortcuts – cold showers, hot coffee, exercise, and other folk "remedies" don't work.

YOU CAN REDUCE THE RISK OF A CRASH

To guard against an alcohol-related crash – or a conviction for Operating While Intoxicated (OWI):

- Don't drink before riding.
- If you do drink, set a limit of no more than one drink an hour. Make every other drink non-alcoholic.
- If you know you want to party, leave your motorcycle at home. Then you won't be tempted to ride.
- If the party's at somebody's home and you overindulged, sleep it off on the couch.
- If you did ride to the party and drank too much, secure your motorcycle and get a ride home, or call a taxi.

CONSEQUENCES

A drinking and riding arrest and conviction will cost you, in lots of ways

It's not just the fine. At the arrest, you may be handcuffed, frisked, transported in the back of a squad car, fingerprinted, photographed and placed in a jail cell until you sober up or find a sober, responsible person willing to assume responsibility for you for the next 12 hours. And remember, your motorcycle could be towed and put in storage.

