



Fact Sheet

FIRST WYOMING MOTORCYCLE SAFETY STATUTES

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QUESTION:

When were Wyoming statutes regarding motorcycle safety first enacted?

ANSWER:

The 1955 Wyoming Legislature passed SF0125, Uniform Act Regulating Traffic on Highways, which unified previous Wyoming traffic regulation statutes and added the following motorcycle safety requirement:

A person operating a motorcycle shall ride only upon the permanent and regular seat attached thereto, and such operator shall not carry any other person nor shall any other person ride on a motorcycle unless such motorcycle is designed to carry more than one person, in which event a passenger may ride upon the permanent and regular seat if designed for two persons, or upon another seat firmly attached to the rear or side of the operator.¹

The 1973 Wyoming Legislature passed SF0040 with additional motorcycle safety requirements, creating W.S. 31-92 subsections (b) through (r):

(a) A person operating a motorcycle shall ride only upon the permanent and regular seat attached thereto and shall not carry any other person nor shall any other person ride on a motorcycle unless the motorcycle is designed to carry more than one person, in which event a passenger may ride upon the permanent and regular seat if designed for two persons, or upon another seat firmly attached to the motorcycle at the rear or side of the operator.

(b) A person shall ride upon a motorcycle only while sitting astride the seat, facing forward.

¹ 1955 Session Laws Chapter 225, Section 95.

(c) No person shall operate a motorcycle while carrying any package, bundle or other article which prevents him from keeping both hands on the handlebars, or obstructs his vision, or interferes with the safe operation of the motorcycle.

(d) No operator shall carry any person, nor shall any person ride in a position that will interfere with the safe operation or control of the motorcycle or the view of the operator.

(e) All motorcycles are entitled to full use of a lane and no motor vehicle shall be driven in such a manner as to deprive any motorcycle of the full use of a lane. This subsection shall not apply to motorcycles operated two abreast in a single lane.

(f) The operator of a motorcycle shall not overtake and pass any vehicle except a single motorcycle in the same lane occupied by the vehicle being overtaken.

(g) No person shall operate a motorcycle between lanes of traffic, or between adjacent lines or rows of vehicles.

(h) [Subsections] (f) and (g) shall not apply to police officers in the performance of their official duties.

(j) Motorcycles shall not be operated more than two abreast in a single lane.

(k) No person riding upon a motorcycle shall attach himself or the motorcycle to any other moving vehicle on a roadway.

(m) Any motorcycle carrying a passenger, other than in a side-car or enclosed cab, shall be equipped with footrests for the passenger.

(n) No person shall operate any motorcycle with handlebars more than 15 inches in height above that portion of the seat occupied by the operator.

(o) No person shall operate or ride nor shall the operator permit a person to ride upon a motorcycle unless he is wearing protective headgear securely fastened on his head, and of a type which complies with standards established by the Wyoming highway commission. This subsection shall not apply to persons riding within an enclosed cab. This subsection shall only apply to motorcycles used on public highways, streets and thoroughfares.

(p) Any person operating a motorcycle shall have the head-lamps of the motorcycle activated at all times, including daylight hours.

(q) Operators of motorcycles operating in an officially authorized parade shall be exempt from subsections (e) through (o).

(r) The Wyoming highway commission is authorized to approve or disapprove protective headgear and eye protective devices required herein, and to issue and enforce regulations establishing standards and specifications for the approval thereof and to the sale and use of such equipment as provided in sections 31-199, 31-200 and 31-201 of the statutes for other vehicle safety equipment. The standard for protective headgear shall meet or exceed

the Z90.1-1971 standard of the American National Standards Institute. However, all existing equipment meeting the Z90.1-1966 standard of the American National Standards Institute shall be accepted.²

If you need further information, please contact the LSO Research Evaluation Department at 307-777-7881.

² 1973 Session Law, Chapter 232, Section 1.