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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OHS Urges Drivers to *Keep An Eye Out for Motorcyclists on Wed.*
July 18th – Ride to Work Day

One killed and two seriously injured in last week in DE motorcycle crashes

Dover – An annual tradition in the nation’s motorcycling community may have motorists seeing more cyclists on the roads this Wednesday. July 18th is national Ride to Work Day, a national initiative of the non-profit organization Ride to Work. The group urges motorcyclists to ride to work on this day to demonstrate that motorcyclists are from all occupations and all walks of life; that motorcyclists can reduce traffic and parking congestion in large cities; and that motorcycles are for transportation as well as recreation.

"National Ride to Work Day is another element in the ongoing campaign to raise awareness of motorcycle safety and ensure safe riding," said Andrea Summers, Community Relations Officer for the Delaware Office of Highway Safety. OHS began its “Ride Safe. Ride Smart.” motorcycle safety campaign in March. The statewide effort is a public awareness initiative aimed at encouraging drivers of passenger vehicles to watch more closely for motorcyclists, and also to remind motorcyclists of their responsibilities when operating their bikes in an effort to reduce motorcycle fatalities.

Delaware safety officials are extremely concerned about the possibility of motorcycle crashes in the coming week particularly as there has been one fatal and two serious injury crashes involving motorcycles in just the last week. Nine motorcycle operators and passengers have been killed in crashes since January 1st, which is three more than had died in crashes at this time last year. In addition to OHS’s ongoing awareness efforts, law enforcement participating in

the statewide “Stop Aggressive Driving” campaign are looking for aggressive motorcycle operators who speed, make unsafe lane changes, and pass on the shoulders.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), motorcycle fatalities have been increasing since 1997, while injuries have been increasing since 1999. More than 100,000 motorcyclists have died in traffic crashes nationally since 1966.

NHTSA data shows that motorcyclists are about 26 times as likely to die in a crash than someone riding in a passenger car, and five times more likely to be injured. With lack of the protection, the effects of a crash involving a motorcycle can be much more devastating than a car crash.

NHTSA and OHS offer some basic pointers to lessen risks and improve safety:

Motorcyclists:

- Attend a rider-training course to learn how to safely and skillfully operate a motorcycle.
- Be more careful and aware at intersections, where most motorcycle -vehicle collisions occur.
- Stay visible to other motorists at all times, not riding in a car's blind spot.
- Be more cautious when riding in inclement weather, on slippery surfaces, or when encountering obstacles on the roadway.
- Place greater reliance on helmets, eye protection and clothing to reduce the severity of injury in a crash.
- Never drink and ride; follow posted speed limits; keep both wheels on the ground at all times

Motorists:

- Always make a visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or leaving a lane of traffic and at intersections;
- Always allow a motorcyclist the full lane width;
- Always signal your intentions before changing lanes or merging with traffic;
- Allow more following distance, three or four seconds, when following a motorcycle, so the motorcyclist has enough time to maneuver or stop in an emergency; Never tailgate.

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