



Whatcom County EMS System Rider Alert Program

Description: The Whatcom County EMS System wants to introduce the *Rider Alert Program*. The *Ride Alert Cards* are placed inside a rider's motorcycle, bicycle, ATV, or ski helmets and contain vital, life-saving information, emergency contact, and important medical history. When EMS, Fire, Police, or Ski Patrol arrive on the scene of an accident, a one-inch round sticker on the outside of the helmet will indicate that the rider has the *Rider Alert Card*. The sticker also warns bystanders not to remove the helmet, which could prevent further injury.

History: The idea came from the United Kingdom (in Essex) to distribute the cards and this became very popular that other areas in the UK like Scotland and England adopted the program and began distributing the cards. In Virginia, the Governor's Motorcycle Advisory Council offered their endorsement and sponsorships, and the program was started in Virginia around 2011.

FAQs:

Why does the decal say "Do not remove Helmet"?

The wording on the decal is aimed at passersby and lay people who may, in an attempt to help the situation, try and force a helmet off the rider's head after the 'unscheduled dismount'. Helmet removal is a two-person skill for medical providers following their protocols and training. The wording therefore should assist with the spinal management of the rider and keep the helmet in place until a professionally trained person can safely remove it.

Can I use a Sharpie style pen on the Card?

The card is manufactured on a waterproof type product and therefore a normal ballpoint pen is all that is needed to write on the card as it engraves the writing in the card. A waterproof style pen leaves a layer on the surface of the card and over time sand itself off, so we advise against using a Sharpie.

Why should You use this card?

We at Whatcom County EMS System and the Rider Alert program believe you can never be safe enough and the more ways a rider can be identified in their moment of emergency. What the responders do know, however, is that the mechanism of injury that a rider suffers and the forces at work against both rider and any equipment that may be carried could be excessive.

The simplicity of the card and the information it contains may survive those impacts and be of use to the attending responder. The program is also free to the user, no registration is required or personal or medical details need to be logged in any databases.

How can you receive the Rider Alert Card?

Contact the Whatcom County EMS Training Specialist Steven Cohen at scohen@co.whatcom.wa.us to request the card. Whatcom County EMS System plans on providing the cards to Fire Departments soon. The future plan is to have Motorcycle and Bike shops in the Whatcom County area to be part of the Rider Alert Card Program.



The Whatcom County EMS System thanks the Richmond Ambulance Authority for their assistance with Whatcom County establishing this program.