

CROSSROADS HOG BRIGHTON, MICHIGAN

SAFETY MINUTE

March 2009

Recycled from

APRIL 2006

SPRING IS SPRUNG !!

Spring is Sprung-The grass is riz-I's wonderin where 'dem Harley's is?

It's finally happened. The snow seems to be gone, the temperatures (at least during the day) are warmer, your motorcycle can be ridden without serious environmental threat to your well being. **ARE YOU READY? IS YOUR MOTORCYCLE READY?** Here are a few tips for you to be sure of both.

Your equipment has been sitting, unused, for a while. It's a good idea to check it out before you "bet your life on it."

- **T-CLOC your bike.**

1. Tires in good shape? Air pressure right?
2. Cables and controls all working properly? Lubricated where appropriate?
3. Lights all working?
4. Oil and fluids fresh and at proper levels?
5. Chassis & sidestand tight and functional? Brakes good and clean?
6. Clean your bike – it's a great way to force a close look at everything.

- **Other GEAR**

1. Leathers in good shape? Jacket, Chaps, Gloves, Boots, etc.
2. Helmet showing any signs of wear or degradation?
3. Travel equipment ready? (i.e. bags, packs, liners, etc)
4. Rain Gear in good shape?
5. Goggles or face shields need replacement?

You have been sitting, unused, for a while – at least the Motorcycle Riding part of you. It's a good idea to check out your 'components' before you "bet your life on 'em."

- **YOU**

1. You have not been on the bike for a while and riding, although a highly mental activity, does take some physical contribution. **Get in shape** for it. Use shorter rides to condition for longer ones. A long day's ride in cooler temperatures to start your season will result in sore muscles – hopefully after you get home and not while you are riding the bike.
2. **Relearn** your bike's ergonomics. Sounds silly but, sit on the bike in the garage and "pretend." You really can loose that familiarization OR maybe you bought a new bike?!
3. Get your **SKILL** level back. Remember it takes some skill to ride a bike and to keep a skill at its peak takes constant application. You've not been applying your skills as a motorcyclist for several months; you are rusty. Take a motorcycle safety course or, at least, go to a parking lot and practice low speed maneuvers and braking exercises.

- **ENVIRONMENT**

1. **Road** surfaces may not be the same as you experienced last Fall. Very familiar roads can take on a whole new challenge (re POT HOLES) and you need to be ready for them. Run a little slower and watch a little more closely. Practice the ability to swerve then use it along with good judgement.
2. **Critters** – the human kind – are not accustomed to motorcycles being on their streets and roads. They need to redevelop the conditioning to watch for us (some never develop it) and we need to be aware of their need. Slow down; make eye contact; dress to be seen; be conspicuous.
3. **More Critters** – the non-human kind. In Spring (and Fall) you are more likely to be riding at dawn and dusk as they happen later and earlier in the day respectively than they do in Summer. These are the times when nocturnal animals are more likely to come out to see your shiny motorcycle. Be alert. Slow down.
4. The **SUN** may be responsible for the warmth but it also presents a threat for you. Since rising and setting times are more likely in our riding times in the Spring (and Fall) the sun is more likely to impair vision to traffic. If the sun is low in the sky and at your back, approaching traffic has a very difficult time seeing you. Likewise, if it is low in the sky and in your eyes, you have a more difficult time seeing traffic and road condition.
5. **Dress** for both seasons. The days are warm but the nights are cool. Be sure you have proper clothing to handle both. Layering works very well for this time of year.

That's my short list. I'm confident you can add to it and you should do so. Do it then get out there and have some fun. Crossroads has some great rides planned for this season and I look forward to enjoying them with you.

Mike – the safety guy