

CROSSROADS HOG #2203

SAFETY THOUGHT

MAY 2010

So - - - you're rolling down a multi-lane highway. You're with the HOG Chapter; riding in a group of 12 bikes; the staggered formation looks quite good; and everyone seems to be riding well. What an enjoyable experience!

Looking ahead you see that the group is approaching a large truck. You glance at your mirror just in time to see the Sweeping Road Captain swing into the left lane. You look ahead and see the Lead Road Captain signal (hand and bike) that he is moving left to pass the 'rig.' Each bike, in succession, signals and moves to the left lane (man that is impressive to see done right!) as do you.

The group is now in the left lane and moving past the 'big rig' and you begin to notice, particularly because you are riding in the right portion of the lane as your position in the stagger, that the truck and its trailer are REALLY BIG AND REALLY CLOSE to you. And that's a bit uncomfortable.

You know that these big trucks occasionally loose a tire tread. You have seen those large pieces and some smaller ones strewn about the road many times. You think:

- What if THIS rig were to lose a tread now – while you and your friends are riding here?
- I wonder if that driver can see that we're here if he has to avoid something on the road?
- What did that Safety Officer say about this situation?

Here's what the SAFETY OFFICER says:

1. Move to the left. Use the space the stagger formation provides. Don't ride close to the truck. We ride in a staggered formation so you have the room to do that. Yes, that will mean we are single-file temporarily – BUT THAT'S OK. Remain alert and return to your stagger position as soon as you are safely past the truck.
2. If you are the rider in the left portion of the lane, be aware that those on the right are going to temporarily move left.
3. The Lead Road Captain is NOT going to signal for a single-file formation before passing as that would add more risk and complication than is necessary.
4. The Sweeping Road Captain is going to watch and keep the Lead well informed of the temporary formation change.

It's that simple to add a greater level of safety to your ride.

Oh – by the way – when you're riding alone – do the same thing – move to the left portion of the lane. Put some space between you and the vehicle you are passing. That cushion of space can provide a lot of insurance for your safety.

Now – go ride and have fun.

Mike "the safety guy" Hoffman