

CROSSROADS HOG

OCTOBER 2009

SAFETY THOUGHTS

Another summer is gone. But the riding season has not ended. We still get a few days where the temperatures are warm enough (with proper clothing) and it's not raining that we can ride and enjoy the color of the season. As you do, here are a few things to keep in mind that will help to make your ride a bit safer.

Watch out for leaves on the road surface.

- They mask the road surface = could be hiding gravel, bumps or holes.
- They are slippery = reduce your traction.
- They can be moist on the bottom and dry on the top = more slippery.
- They can hide frost on the bottom = even more slippery.
- **Stay off the leaves. Slow down.**

Watch for frosty road surface.

- Frost can linger on the road surface in the shade = slippery like black ice.
- **Slow down. Watch for darker surface color.**

Cold Tires.

- Your tires do not get as warm as in summer riding; their tractive capability is reduced.
- **Slow down. Reduce your cornering speed.**

Wild Life

- With dusk coming earlier and dawn coming later the 'critters' are more likely to be moving around while you're riding.
- Hunting season will get them moving more and more erratically.
- **Slow down. Ride near the centerline.**

People

- Drivers (other) are not expecting motorcycles in colder weather.
- Drivers are distracted more by the scenery.
- Drivers don't see as well at dusk and in the dark.
- **Be conspicuous as possible. Establish plenty of 'space cushion.'**

Sun

- The sun sets earlier and rises later. It is blinding to drivers and riders.

- Be aware of the sun's position relative to you. Adjust accordingly to maximize your visibility and your ability to see. Sometimes it's better to park for a bit.

You

- Temperature range is greater. You can end up both too cold and too warm on your ride.
- Have with you layers of clothing and warmer gloves so you can change, add or remove as needed.

Fall riding is some of the best of the year. These adjustments will help you enjoy it more and longer. Enjoy.

Mike – the Safety Guy