

# News For Thought



## State vows to step up motorcycle safety after spike in deaths

CONCORD, N.H. After motorcycle accident deaths rose dramatically for the second year in a row, New Hampshire safety officials say they will step up safety programs aimed specifically at bikers.

Twenty-seven people were killed in motorcycle crashes in 2004, and 42 died last year. After the 2004 deaths, the state began a program that included safety messages

for motorcyclists and other drivers through advertising, road signs, highway maps and messages on state employee paychecks. A task force on motorcycle safety plans to expand on the program this year. The push includes requiring new motorcycle drivers to pass a written test before getting a learners' permit. The state also will continue urging motorcyclists to complete driver training courses.

## Malaysian cities may ban motorcycles

The Government of Malaysia has been urged to ban motorcycle use in city centers to reduce accidents. Malaysian Association for Community Development Volunteers (MACOM) president, Norizan Sharif said current actions against errant motorcyclists had not been effective.

Norizan added that such a ban would help reduce the number of vehicles going into city centers, accidents, illegal racing and related problems. The ban could also help reduce crimes such as snatch thefts and also air and noise pollution, she added.

"There is sufficient cheap public transport in Malaysian cities which can be used by motorcyclists," she said, adding that motorcycles should continue to be allowed in rural areas because public transportation there is still lacking. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

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## S.C. bill would make stop lights optional for bikers

With 44 years of motorcycle riding experience, Billy Richardson knows what he likes - "You're out in the open a lot more, it's more relaxing" - and what he doesn't. "I get upset sitting at the traffic lights and waiting all the time," he says. It's a problem that not only irritated him, but

it prompted him to write a bill. A piece of legislation that - if passed - would turn sensor stop lights into stop signs for motorcycle riders.

Richardson proposed the legislation because he says most bikes aren't heavy enough to set off sensors, so unless a car pulled up, the light wouldn't change. "We want the freedom to go if the road is clear. We're not going to pull out. Trust me, ain't no motorcycle gonna pull out in front of nobody," he says.

They would, though, get to go straight, go left, whatever, when drivers of cars couldn't. He says he has a lot of support and hopes to soon get the green light to go on red. "We've got good positive feedback about it and I feel good. I won't lie about it, I feel good," he says with a grin. Richardson says Minnesota, Tennessee and Arkansas already have similar laws in effect. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

## The ever-lovin need for speed

Speeding is not necessarily reckless, even at 128 mph, a judge ruled regarding a motorcyclist who tried to flee from state troopers.

County Judge John Steinheider ruled that Jacob H. Carman, 20, was not guilty of reckless driving when he was spotted by a trooper who then chased him at the top speed of his cruiser's odometer - 128 mph. He said "As much as it pains me to do it, speed and speed alone is not sufficient to establish reckless driving." He did say that if he had a passenger he'd have thrown the book at him. Nevertheless, Carman was fined \$300.00 for trying to elude the cop and expired tags. I'm sorry folks, but running because your tags are out of date is foolish any way ya look at it. [www.aimncom.com/mc\\_news/gunny](http://www.aimncom.com/mc_news/gunny)

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## Janklow gets law license back

The South Dakota Supreme Court ruled on January 5th to reinstate the law license of former Congressman Bill Janklow, who was convicted of felony manslaughter in the traffic death of a motorcyclist in 2003. The former four-term governor was forced to resign from Congress and lost his

license and right to practice law when he was convicted of second-degree manslaughter, reckless driving, speeding and failure to stop at a stop sign in the death of motorcyclist Randy Scott, 55, who was killed in August 2003 when Janklow blew through a stop sign and into the path of Scott's motorcycle. After a jury found him guilty, Janklow was sentenced to only 100 days in jail, was placed on probation until January 2007 and cannot drive for three years. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

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## Washington State Patrol:

These minions of the law are using a new approach to seat-belt cheaters. In Spanaway, WA a State Trooper, in plain clothes with a cardboard sign around his neck that read "Happy Holidays - Buckle Up," stood on a corner and helped bust 30 people for not wearing their seat belts. When he spotted someone who wasn't wearing a seat belt he

radioed fellow troopers parked nearby who pulled over the offender. I guess most people thought he was a panhandler, and I would have too, and some even offered him money. I call that entrapment. [www.aimncom.com/mc\\_news/gunny](http://www.aimncom.com/mc_news/gunny)

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## Governor injured in motorcycle accident

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and his 12 year old son, Patrick, received minor injuries in a recent motorcycle accident near their Brentwood home when a neighbor backed into the street in front of the governor's Harley-Davidson motorcycle equipped with sidecar.

Schwarzenegger received 15 stitches to repair a cut lip, but may have skidded into more trouble when it was discovered that the big screen action hero has been riding motorcycles for years without a proper license endorsement.

The governor has the Class C license, which technically covers the operation of a sidecar under state motor vehicle law; but Schwarzenegger said he "never thought about" getting his motorcycle license. He said that he had a motorcycle license when he lived in Europe, but never considered obtaining another one after he immigrated to the United States in 1968.

But now after all the brouhaha over his most recent accident, he has promised to get his license and vowed to continue to ride. In December 2001, Schwarzenegger broke six ribs and was hospitalized for four days after a motorcycle crash in Los Angeles when a car stopped in front of him and he was unable to change lanes to avoid the vehicle. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

## United Kingdom:

No Luxembourg Compromise! The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG-UK) is calling for the UK Government NOT to accept the Luxembourg Compromise for the 3rd European License Directive, regarding motorcycle licensing. Y'see, WE still worry about HELMET LAWS in the USA, and we should be paying more attention to what's going on in Europe. The European Parliament is calling for structured licensing across the board in Europe. That means if you're 35 years old, for example, and a new rider, YOU WILL BE RESTRICTED to a lesser license than what your friends might have, and forced to ride a bike with a smaller engine! MAG says this will have a detrimental effect on motorcycle riding all over the continent. Remember folks, when it happens in Europe, it isn't long before we are dealing with it right here in the good ol' US of A. [www.aimncom.com/mc\\_news/gunny](http://www.aimncom.com/mc_news/gunny)