

News For Thought



Helmet Law Violators Will Be Shot

A remote village in Zamboanga City in the Philippines, which is trying to promote eco-tourism, has banned motorcycle riders from wearing a full-face helmet and warned that violators will be shot.

A huge tarpaulin sign now hangs on the entrance of Lumayang, and the new village law has attracted strong criticism from various sectors because of its extreme warning. Frederick Atilano, the village chieftain, insists the new law will make their 1,600 residents safe from hired killers, who usually ride tandem on motorcycles and wear full face helmets to conceal their identity.

"This is for the safety of our people against killers. We are banning the use of full face helmets in Lumayang because we wanted to protect the safety of everyone. Motorcycle riders who insist on entering Lumayang with their full face helmet will be shot," he told the Mindanao Examiner, adding that they also put up a checkpoint in the village to ensure the implementation of his order.

Lawyer Aminola Abaton, the regional director of the Land Transportation Office for Western Mindanao, said Chief Atilano's order to ban the use of helmets violates the Republic Act No. 10054, also known as the "Motorcycle Helmet Act" law which was signed in March 2010 and is centered on the very safety of the motorcycle riders and the law must at all times be complied with.

Abaton said according to the helmet law, any person caught not wearing the standard protective motorcycle helmet will be punished with a fine of P1,500 for the first offense; P3,000 for the second offense; P5,000 for the third offense, and P10,000 and confiscation of the driver's license for the fourth and succeeding offenses. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

Pennsylvania Proposal Would Mandate Safety Courses For Young Riders

A bill aimed at increasing the safety of young motorcycle riders has passed in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives 181-1 and is on its way to the Senate.

The legislation sponsored by Rep. Seth Grove (R-Dover Township) would require anyone seeking a Class M (motorcycle) junior driver's license to complete a free state-approved 15-hour safety course. The course "gives younger riders good fundamentals," Grove said.

Anyone under 18 would have to take the course, which highlights areas such as drinking and driving, defensive driving, and proper motorcycle techniques. "Experience counts when it comes to motorcycle safety," Grove said. "Operating a motorcycle is very different than driving a car, and my goal is to increase the safety and awareness of Pennsylvania's young motorcyclists."

Also under Grove's bill, riders on a class M learner's permit and under the age of 18 must complete 65 hours of practical driving and have held the learner's permit for six months before they can take the junior license exam.

Currently, riders have to pass a test in order to get a riders' permit, which is valid for one year, and then pass a driving test to get a motorcycle license.

A course, called the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program, is optional but is not required. If a rider takes and passes the course, they automatically receive a class M license. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

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Permanent Motorcycle Warning Signs Installed Across U.S.

To kick off National Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, "Watch for Motorcycles" signs are being donated and installed by Allstate Insurance to help prevent motorcycle crashes at intersections.

Currently, there is no standard sign for motorcycle awareness, and Allstate aims to standardize warning signs for motorcycle safety to target dangerous intersections in more than 30 cities across the country this year.

The yellow, diamond-shaped signs were developed by Allstate as part of its "Once is Never Enough" program, an awareness campaign that encourages people to look twice for motorcycles at intersections.

The permanently installed signs caution motorists to "Watch for Motorcycles" at intersections, which is where most multi-vehicle collisions occur for riders. The signs were designed to establish a standardized warning device that can be used by any local or state agency and would be recognizable to riders and motorists across the country.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 46% of all multi-vehicle crashes occur at intersections, oftentimes as a result of a vehicle turning left, impeding the motorcyclist's right-of-way. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

Weird News: Man Sues BMW For Giving Him A Hard Time

While an extended state of arousal after a motorcycle ride might sound like typical rhetoric of the two wheel crowd, one man is now suing BMW Motorrad USA and the maker of an aftermarket seat after a motorcycle ride left him with an erection that wouldn't go away.

The California man is claiming that a BMW motorcycle and a dealer installed custom seat are responsible for causing priapism -- which thanks to TV advertisements for erectile dysfunction we now know is an erection lasting four hours or longer.

According to an excerpt from the complaint; "Plaintiff was riding his 1993 BMW motorcycle equipped with a Corbin-Pacific seat. The ride lasted approximately two hours each way to plaintiff's destination, after which plaintiff developed a severe case of priapism. Plaintiff alleges that this condition was caused by the ridge-like seat on his motorcycle, negligently designed, manufactured and/or installed by defendants."

The suit filed in the Superior Court of San Francisco County seeks damages for lost wages, personal injury, medical expenses, product liability, and negligent infliction of emotional distress. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

Senator Klobuchar Honored For Protecting Riders' Rights

Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar has been awarded the Motorcycle Industry Council Chairman's Award for her invaluable efforts in stopping the ban on youth ATVs and dirt bikes, and for saving the Recreational Trails Program.

For more than two years, the powersports industry was banned from selling youth sized ATVs, motorcycles and snowmobiles, inadvertently swept up in comprehensive legislation known as the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act -- a law intended to protect children from harmful lead content in toys.

"When our industry needed a champion, Senator Klobuchar rose to the occasion, worked with her colleagues, and led the effort to ensure that youth ATVs, motorcycles and snowmobiles were excluded from the law," said MIC chairman Larry Little.

Minnesota manufacturer Polaris hosted the award presentation and the company's president and CEO Bennett J. Morgan also recognized Klobuchar for her work on a critical amendment to the transportation reauthorization legislation known as the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act.

Klobuchar, a first-term democrat elected in 2006, also introduced an amendment that sought to restore the Recreational Trails Program, which benefits outdoor recreation including snowmobiling, ATV riding, off-road motorcycling and other off OHV use. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

Kansas Legislature Streamlines Motorcycle Licensure

Kansas Governor Sam Brownback has approved a measure to allow class M motorcycle license applicants who have successfully completed prior motorcycle safety training in accordance with Department of Defense instruction 6055.04 (DoDI 6055.04) to receive their license without completing further written and driving testing. House Bill 2459 was sponsored by Rep. Tom Sloan (R-Lawrence), and was signed into law by Gov. Brownback on March 21, 2012. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

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