

ABATE NEWSLETTER



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ASK YOUR LAWYER

Rod Taylor, ABATE Legal Services, abatelegal.com

WHEN THE EX HATES MOTORCYCLES

Q. I have a son whom I share joint custody with their father. This past summer, my son developed an interest in riding on motorcycles. As a single mom, I struggle in keeping him interested in activities that we can honestly share. He is fully equipped for rider safety. I am a very skilled and well trained motorcyclist and usually only allow him to ride with me. His non-motorcyclist father found out that he was riding and was very upset. He is very anti-motorcycle and forbids our son from riding. The father claims that he can get a court decree prohibiting our son from riding. Can he get such a decree from the court?

A. You have asked a good and complicated question. [I am assuming you have sole custody of your son.] The court has considerable discretion in its ruling on this issue, but the judge should know that this activity is permitted by law, as is football, soccer, cheerleading, gymnastics, climbing and many other sports/activities - like flying in a small plane.

First, I would make every effort to educate your ex with statistics demonstrating that motorcycle incidents involving minors are almost non-existent. This is so because of the extreme care most parents and others take when

riding with a minor child. You will be able to show that incidents of injuries to minors from a motorcycle crash are less than with football, gymnastics and other school sports.

You could also argue that riding as a passenger on a motorcycle is safer than being a cheerleader, for example. As we know, injuries from that activity are eye opening. Educate him about the riding skills of others who may take your son riding. And let him know that those skills learned while riding will improve your son's skills when he starts driving.

If you do wind up in court, then you must go through the same education process for the judge. Find out if the judge rides as many do. Be prepared to prove the riding experience of all of those involved. Bring in your driving and insurance records demonstrating your safe nature and prove it. Bring your son's safety equipment to court and show the judge. Check with your local motorcycle safety instructors who may provide helpful expertise to the court. In short, educate the court that your parental decision is within the norm of American life and that riding is part of that norm. If the judge rides – HE ALREADY KNOWS THIS. If you get into a jam or need statistics for the above, call me.

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Riding With A Passenger

By IF24KT

Riding two-up can be a great way to enjoy motorcycling and your sweetie, but it can also be dangerous and challenging. If you don't want to pack someone, don't, or offer them a ride on your back fender, sans seat, like I do. However, should you want to pack your honey, or a friend needs a ride, communication and cooperation is paramount (no pun intended). Know and remember, that ABATE offers a Rider With Passenger course as part of our regular curriculum. Go on line, or visit Alaska Leather to sign up for this excellent training.

A passenger who does not understand how to move with a motorcycle can impair handling and contribute to a crash. So, fully gear up before getting on the motorcycle and the rider gets on first. The bike should be supported by the rider's legs, not the side stand, or center stand, even though that may seem easier or like fun.

The passenger should throw their leg over the saddle and promptly center their weight in the middle of the bike. Passengers should NOT put their foot on the peg or footrest and expect the rider to keep the bike from tipping.

Once on the bike, the passenger should keep their feet on the footrests or pegs at all times, including at stops. The passenger holds on to the riders' waist or the bike's seat strap or hand holds, and anticipates the need to brace occasionally for acceleration and braking.

When going through turns, looking over the rider's inside (to the turn) shoulder will help the passenger naturally lean into the curve. Passengers should not lean away from the turn, as this will make cornering more difficult for the rider.

Riders need to master basic skills before carrying a passenger and your speeds and lean angles should be modest. Riders should maintain plenty of safety margin to avoid having to brake hard or swerve, and remember, it takes three times as long to stop on a motorcycle as a car. Also, passengers should pay attention and hold on!!! Some passengers have fallen off and were lucky to not be run over by the car behind. In Alaska, the Riders has a choice regarding helmet usage, but the Passenger is required to wear one. Check the laws if you are riding out of state. Remember Passengers, pay attention!!!

FEDERAL FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR DISTRACTED DRIVERS

Motorcycle Safety Foundation, April 13, 2016

Funds are available from the federal government for states that enact distracted driving legislation. H.R. 22, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (otherwise known as FAST Act), authorizes funds for highway safety programs that include distracted driving initiatives.

Section 2005, Article 4 of the bill specifically provides funding for distracted driving legislation, stating, "In each fiscal year, 8.5 percent of the funds provided under this section shall be allocated among States that adopt and implement effective laws to reduce distracted driving." While there is specific language that spells out the details of eligibility, in general, states that are interested in applying for these grant monies need to:

- Make distracted driving awareness a part of the driver's license examination
- Pass legislation making it illegal to text while driving
- Pass legislation that prohibits drivers under the age of 18 (or on a learner's permit) from using a wireless communications device while driving.

These grant funds can be used in a variety of ways, including public advertising campaigns that explain the dangers of texting while driving, traffic signs that warn motorists about distracted driving laws, or for the costs related to enforcing distracted driving laws.

Often state legislatures are reluctant to pass new legislation if there is a perceived cost, and these grant funds help offset any costs states would incur by passing distracted driving legislation. If you are interested in promoting distracted driver legislation, you are encouraged to accept this opportunity and make legislators aware of these grant funds. This funding availability can help sway a legislature towards passage of laws that ultimately protect not just motorcyclists but all roadway users.

Read the full text of the FAST Act: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/22/text#toc-H193364E12BE847F39AF58BF007E245F4>



MOTORCYCLE RECALLS

Five Suzuki Recalls for V-Strom 1000, V-Strom 650, SFV650 & Burgman

By Byron Wilson

January 8, 2016 : Suzuki issued five recalls through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recently, concerning a number of V-Strom 1000, V-Strom 650, SFV650 and Burgman models. Below is a breakdown of the specifics of each recall. Suzuki customer service can be reached at 1-714-966-7040 for more information.

Suzuki Recall ID Number 2A53:

**2014 DL1000 (V-Strom 1000) –
Manufactured January 17, 2014 – June 5, 2014**

**2015 DL1000 (V-Strom 1000) –
Manufactured November 5, 2014 – February 6, 2015**

The first recall addresses the potential for the ignition switch terminals to become corroded if they come into contact with liquid, such as salt water. The Defect Notice submitted to the NHTSA states that if such corrosion occurs, “the ignition lead wire and wire harness terminals of the connector can be connected, completing the power circuit independent of the ignition switch. Under this condition, the engine cannot be stopped by turning off the ignition key.” Suzuki Motor Corporation received reports of this problem occurring in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Austria, Japan and Canada throughout 2015. Suzuki will install a cover on the ignition switch connector to rectify the issue. If corrosion is found to have already taken place, the ignition lead wire and wire harness will be replaced as well. The repairs will be completed free of charge, and owners that have already paid to fix the issue prior to the recall will be reimbursed.

The same selection of V-Strom 1000 motorcycles has a second recall, this one owing to the potential for the “battery ground connection (to) develop poor conductivity due to corrosion or a weak connection to the painted surface of the crankcase to which it is attached.” If the issue is present, “the engine may stall and be unable to be restarted.” Suzuki will move the battery ground connection to an unpainted surface, near the exhaust pipe. The wire protector will be replaced as well with a high-heat resistant tube. As with the first recall, Suzuki dealers will remedy the issue free of charge and reimburse any owners that have already incurred costs in fixing the problem.

And finally the third recall for this group of V-Strom 1000s is to address a “wiring harness that may rub

against the bottom of the fuel tank. Vibration from riding may cause the wiring insulation to wear off, allowing bare wire to short circuit against the fuel tank.” Suzuki dealers will reroute wire harnesses found to be in the improper position. If wear is shown, dealers will add protective tape. If bare wire is shown, dealers will replace the entire wire harness.

Honda Recalls 22,142 Shadow Cruiser Models

Wednesday, January 13, 2016

Honda has recalled 22,142 of its Shadow cruiser models due to a defect with the bank angle sensor.

Five Suzuki Recalls for V-Strom 1000, V-Strom 650, SFV650 & Burgman

Friday, January 8, 2016

Suzuki has issued five separate recall notifications through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for a number of V-Strom 1000, V-Strom 650, Burgman and SFV650 models.

Yamaha Issues 2015 YZF-R1 Recall Through NHTSA

Monday, December 28, 2015

Yamaha has issued a recall through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for all 2015 YZF-R1 motorcycles due to a transmission issue.

Suzuki Recalls 2016 GSX-S1000 Models

Monday, December 14, 2015

Suzuki Motor of America has issued a recall through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for certain 2016 GSX-S1000, GSX-S1000A and GSX-s1000FA motorcycles due to a potential front brake caliper issue. Affected motorcycles may leak brake fluid from the front brake caliper, according to the NHTSA release. There are potentially 600 units affected by [...]

BMW Recalls 2013-2015 C 600 Sport & C 650 GT Scooters

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

BMW has issued a recall through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for certain 2013-2015 C 600 Sport and C 650 GT scooter.

KYMCO USA Recalls all 2015 & 2016 Super 8x 50cc and 150cc Scooters

Monday, November 9, 2015

KYMCO USA has issued a recall for all 2015 and 2016 Super 8X 50cc and 150cc model scooters for a potential hydraulic brake line issue.

HOW 'BOUT THAT

TIPS AND TRICKS

By Tom Mehren

Super Handy Cheap Tread Gauge: Take a U.S. penny, rotate it upside down with the head side facing you. Now place the penny into your tire tread. If you can see all of Mr. Lincoln's head, you're ready for a new tire. The rule of thumb is to replace your tires when the depth is 1/16th of an inch of tread or less. Mr. Lincoln's head just happens to be 1/16th-inch from the edge of a penny. Anything less than 1/16th-inch, and you risk hydroplaning. If you let it go further, you'll risk exposing the vulnerable carcass of the tire.

Did you See??: The coroners in six South Carolina counties began stenciling road surfaces with a cross and the message, "Look Twice, Save a Life" at locations where fatal motorcycles crashed occurred. "I hope that (drivers) seeing that, they'll be more aware of the next motorcycle they pass," Rick Allison, president of the state's Motorcycle Awareness Alliance, told a local TV station. "Just take a little bit more time and check your surroundings."

TAILGATERS!!!: Make sure that you're not tailgating the vehicle in front of you because you may be forced to make a too-quick stop due to your own lack of proper space cushion and then your tailgater can/will crash into you!! Oh boy!!! A sandwich!

If there is no one in front of you, don't speed up as your tailgater may speed up with you and there you are riding faster than you want, and making risky decisions and a nasty situation even more dangerous. You may have an aggressive driver, as well as an unaware driver!!! Try flashing your brake light (without slowing down), wait a few seconds and then flash it again. This sends a cautionary message.

Encourage your tailgater to pass you. Slow down. Change lanes. Leave the road at the next safe opportunity (open side road, big road shoulder, pull off, etc.). Be extra cautious. Glance at your rear view mirror more frequently. Plot escape paths to your right and left to avoid being trapped. Don't lose focus on your attention to the road ahead from distraction by the tailgater behind. Carrying rocks in your pocket and throwing them over your shoulder at the tailgaters' windshield is not nice.

Federal \$\$\$\$: Wall Street is desperately trying to persuade House lawmakers to kill a proposal that would use money from the banks to fix the nation's highways. A key concern is that once Congress taps the finance industry to help fund infrastructure projects, it won't stop. At stake is an annual dividend of 6% the banks receive from the Federal Reserve which totals less than \$350 million apiece for JP Morgan Chase, Bank of America, Citigroup, and Wells Fargo. The Senate wants to cut the dividend and use the money to help pay for a highway funding bill.

FEDERAL AUTOCYCLE BILL INTRODUCED: U.S. Rep. John Moolenaar has introduced a H.R. 2892 that creates a national definition of "autocycle" and eliminates the ambiguity created as states adopt varying standards for the enclosed three-wheeled vehicles. Moolenaar says "outdated regulations" are holding back the business developing these vehicles. The House bill is companion to S. 685 introduced by U.S. Sen. David Vitter. More than 25 states have enacted or are developing classifications for three-wheeled vehicles that meet some standards for motorcycles, but feature automobile-type steering wheels, seats and other features.

Meet 'n' Greet 2016

Saturday night on January 23, 2016, ABATE of Alaska held their 5th annual Meet and Greet where we honor our volunteers, feed our members, thank the outgoing Board and Officers and then introduce our newly elected Board and officers. As usual, it was a great event with plenty of good food, a great bunch of people, some fun, and a few prizes for the 150 or so attendees we had.



This year, the ABATE of Alaska membership honored me by presenting me with the Warren Garrison Award. I'm am very humbled by this recognition and hope I am able to continue to provide support for Abate of Alaska and its members that earned me this honor.

Thank you all very much!

**"Big Dave Grizzly", Abate of Alaska
Vice-President
Webmaster
Board Chairman**

Warren Garrison Award

Here is what the Warren Garrison Award is all about:

Warren Garrison was an outstanding member of ABATE. Though he did not hold an office or board position, he was always here with his insight, knowledge and helping hands. Upon his death in 1993 ABATE decided to honor him by creating an award in his name. This is ABATE's highest award and is given to the person or persons that the membership feels has exemplified and promoted ABATE and its volunteer mission to the highest standards for the past year. This award is open to anyone that is a current member of ABATE.





A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska Break-up Run

SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2016

-Poker Run, \$5/hand

-All you can eat BBQ, \$16

FIRST CARD:

THE ROCK WOOD FIRED KITCHEN

IN THE NORTHWAY MALL

. MEET UP 11:00 AM

. KICKSTANDS 11:30 AM

LAST CARD:

SHEEP CREEK LODGE

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. BROTHERHOOD

. BBQ AT 3:30 PM

. LIVE MUSIC

2016
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MAY 7TH 10AM-1PM



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11:00AM Bike Games & Activities

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facebook.com/BikeBlessingTheGathering

For information on acquiring a booth please contact
ABATE of Alaska 907-562-2324

ABATE CLASS OFFERINGS

KICKSTART: Total fee: \$99

We recommend this for people with no experience, or if you're unsure if motorcycle riding is really for you. It's on Thursday evenings beginning the end of April. The class consists of three hours of basic "on bike" riding instruction. No tests, no pressure, no worries. Student to instructor ratio is very low. It will give you valuable clutch and throttle practice if continuing on to the basic class. **This course is for:** Anyone who wants a taste of motorcycling in a low-risk environment and anyone who wants extra time to prepare for the Basic Rider Course.

THE BASIC RIDER COURSE: Total fee: \$285

This class gives you the fundamentals of operating a motorcycle. Although it is basic, it moves at a much faster pace than Kickstart. The course is spread over three days, which includes five hours of classroom instruction, ten hours of riding (motorcycle included). Classes begin on Friday evening for the weekend classes and Sunday evening for the weekday classes at 6:00 PM. As a minimum, each student must be able to ride and balance a bicycle.

BASIC RIDERCOURSE 2: Total fee: \$160

Formerly known as Experienced RiderCourse (ERC)

For the rider who knows what he or she is doing, or thinks they know. Most riders who have never taken a class will be surprised how much they'll learn. You take this course on your own motorcycle, improving your skills on your own machine. There is an on-range classroom for the Experienced RiderCourse, which is five hours of riding and instruction on the range. It is held on either Wednesday or Friday evenings beginning at 5:00 PM and includes a written test. All riders MUST provide their own safe, street-legal motorcycle with current registration and proof of insurance.

BASIC RIDERCOURSE 2 WITH PASSENGER: Total fee: \$160

This is the same course as the Basic RiderCourse 2 listed above, but with a passenger. Passengers are not provided, and you must bring your own (that was a joke, but true!!!).

ROAD TEST: Total fee: \$39

Road Testing is a skills assessment of your motorcycling ability that is required by the State of Alaska. ABATE of Alaska can conduct this skills assessment for you so you don't have to mess with DMV. Road Tests are scheduled by appointment only, beginning at 6:00 PM. You must provide a motorcycle with current registration, proof of insurance, and a Motorcycle Permit. The motorcycle must be street legal and in good operating condition. You will need to bring proof of satisfactory completion of the Road Test to the DMV office for your motorcycle endorsement and DMV does charge a fee for the endorsement.



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ALASKA BIKERS ADVOCATING TRAINING & EDUCATION

ABATE Class Offerings, continued

FOR ALL CLASSES: Participant Requirements

Each student MUST provide and wear the following required safety gear during the experience:

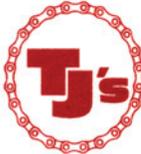
- D.O.T. approved helmet (loaners available)
- Eye protection (glasses or face shield)
- Full-fingered gloves
- Long-sleeve shirt or jacket
- Over-the-ankle boots (with low heels)
- Long pants (jeans with no holes or tears, sturdy material recommended)
 - Raingear, just in case. We call it rain insurance.
 - Water, granola bars, etc. There are portable toilets but no other facilities. You can leave for lunch (one hour), and there are several restaurants in the area.

On-line sign-up is available at: <http://www.learnortidealaska.com>, or www.abateofalaska.com and a schedule of classes is provided on these sites as well. Also, you can go to Alaska Leather on Minnesota Dr., Anchorage and register there.



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Ask Your Lawyer, continued from front page

TRAILER PARK AND MOTORCYCLE JUSTICE - Just What Can A Park Owner Get By With?

Note from Rod: ABATE LEGAL has received questions relating to mobile home park restrictions on motorcycles. Here is the question:

Q: I just moved into a mobile home park. I am on a very limited income and my motorcycle is a primary means of transportation. My bike has stock mufflers and is no louder than most of the vehicles in the park - actually a lot quieter than most of the trucks. The park rules bar motorcycles from the park at all times - no exceptions. Can they get by with this and do I have to comply?

A: Let's first determine if the streets of the park are public or private. This is very important in determining your approach to the park. If the streets are private, your burden is considerable. If the streets are public, you will have an easy time in winning your point. Most states that have laws governing rules in mobile home parks and most require that the rules must be reasonable.

The Illinois law can be found at 765 ILCS 745, the Mobile Home Landlord and Tenant Rights Act. In Illinois for example, such rules are valid only if the rules "promote convenience, safety and welfare of the tenants, preserve park property from damage or distribute park services and facilities to the tenants."

In Illinois, I would argue that a general prohibition of motorcycles is not enforceable unless your motorcycle runs afoul of these validity tests. For example, if your motorcycle complies with noise and safety issues, how can the park argue such a bar would promote the safety of tenants and preservation of park property, etc.? Accordingly, you should request a meeting to demonstrate that none of the prohibition rules apply in your case. Be armed with evidence that your motorcycle complies with all noise, safety and emission requirements. The gist of your points is that a general bar of all motorcycles is simply not reasonable.

The law in most states require some connection to reason before a general bar to a legal means of transportation could be sanctioned. Most regulations like these are directed toward those who would disturb the peace of residents with motorcycles that are loud and speed. As to the latter, speed can be controlled by means other than a general prohibition, like fines or expulsion. Excessive noise can be controlled in a similar fashion.

I smell a park owner who just does not want to deal with these issues. Use your powers of persuasion that motorcycles should be encouraged. For example, parking is less of an issue, and noise in many cases of smaller commuting motorcycle are almost stealth like. Help convince him that motorcycles are an advantage in the park if speed and noise rules are strictly enforced. Suggest that stiff fines could be the solution.

The Indiana law can be found at Indiana Code 32-31-7, Landlord Tenant Relations. I.C. 32-31-7-5(5) states that a tenant must comply with all reasonable rules and regulations in existence at the time the rental agreement is entered into. A tenant must also comply with amended rules and regulations as provided in the rental agreement. Again, arm yourself with evidence that a rule prohibiting motorcycles is not reasonable.

The Ohio law can be found at Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3733, Manufactured Home Parks; Recreational Vehicle Parks, Recreation Camps, Park-Camps, Marinas; Agricultural Labor Camps. In Ohio for example, such rules are valid only if the rules are not unreasonable, arbitrary, or capricious. So arm yourself with evidence that the rule against having motorcycles on property is unreasonable, arbitrary, and/or capricious. He may say "uncle".

There is also a provision that requires a resident to conduct yourself in a manner that will not disturb the other park residents' peaceful enjoyment of the park., which may be the owner's reason for the park barring motorcycles.

Most laws also require certain notice provisions as set forth above. Call me if you did not get a copy of the rules and regulations prior to signing the lease. If you have been a tenant for more than 30 days, let's find out if the park owner was considering a motorcycle prohibition at the same he was selling you on the park. This is especially important if he had knowledge that you owned a motorcycle when you signed the lease as this could be a form of fraud if he slipped this past you at the time you signed on.

continued on next page

Ask Your Lawyer, continued

WHEN TREES GET YOU DOWN - WHAT TO DO AND WHO TO NOTIFY

Q: I was in a bike accident Monday. A tree was hiding the stop light and I didn't see it until the last minute. I locked it up but ended up sliding through the stop light and hitting a car. I was given a ticket for running the red light. The officer told me that I could go to court, plead my case about the light being hidden and get the ticket dropped. He basically admitted that the light was hidden. Now, people are telling us to sue. We are not sue happy people but if the tree had been trimmed this would not have happened. What can I do? ABATE member.

A: There are a number of things you can do to help yourself out and preserve facts for your case. You are like a lot of folks in this country that have never filed a lawsuit and understandably want nothing to do with that process. Sometimes a case like yours can be resolved simply by making a request to the court that is well documented and compelling. In order to get to that position, get a series of photos approaching the light from the lane in which you were riding. A simple camera photo will do. If the city has already cut the branches, get photos of their recent modification. Statements of the adjoining property owners and others witnessing the trimming by the City should be obtained as soon as possible. These witnesses demonstrate that the City had notice of the hazard. You will have the burden to prove that the light was obscured at the time of the crash. If the City

(you need to make sure they had the responsibility for trimming the tree) has not trimmed the branches yet, a notice by you to them is in order. A copy of the cell phone photos should be emailed to them immediately. RoadHazard.org sent a notice, which should help. If you have a copy of the police report, send it to us. If not, we will order one for you. That will be useful in both locating the police officer who responded, as well as identifying how he documented the accident. He may have listed critical witnesses who can confirm our facts. You will need a statement from him admitting that the tree obscured the light asap before he forgets about your case. You must also notify your insurance carrier of your crash in writing. And send them a copy of your photos and a copy of the crash report.

When you are making a claim against a government entity, you will need to make sure you place them on notice of the accident. Most states, including Indiana, require that a specific notice be given to the government entity within a certain time of the incident. If you fail to do that properly you can lose your claim. In Illinois, suit must be brought against the government entity within one year of the incident. In Ohio, there is no notice requirement, but the suit must be brought within two years. Good luck and if you have any questions call us.

**Ride Safe & Free,
Rod Taylor, ABATE Legal Services, abatelegal.com**

All questions from ABATE members are answered confidentially unless otherwise authorized and only after the matter is concluded, except when authorization for publication anonymously or otherwise is given for pending matters. Remember, injured ABATE members pay only 28 ½% of total recovery and expenses as approved by client, consistent with and conforming to applicable state law. Elsewhere, you may pay 33 ½%, 40% or even 50% of your recovery. ABATE members are not charged for recovery of damage to your motorcycle, and have access to a 24-hour toll-free telephone number. Call us at 1-(800)-25-RIDER. Questions? Submit them to: RodTaylor@abatelegal.com © 2016.

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Ron & Krista Feece

How To Ride Your Street Motorcycle in Gravel:

Tips For Riding In Reduced Traction Situations

By Tricia Szulewski, MSF RiderCoach

Gravel happens. At some point in your motorcycling life you'll find yourself faced with riding in gravel. Motorcyclists rarely choose to ride in gravel. You can choose to turn around, but that's not always an option. You need to be able to get through it in one piece. Roadside pullouts that are not paved and road construction are the two most common scenarios where you'll encounter loose rocks and/or dirt and sand. (Experienced rider tip: when making lodging reservations, always ask if there is any gravel on which you must travel to get there.) Whether it's gravel, dirt, sand, grass, or any slick surface, the same rules apply. **You want to minimize the motorcycle's lean and abstain from any sudden input such as braking, accelerating, or swerving. I'll say it again: Minimize the motorcycle's lean and abstain from any sudden input such as braking, accelerating, or swerving.**

When we lose traction, defined as the "grip of a tire on a road," it's easy to lose control of the motorcycle. But don't lose your head.

If your motorcycle is already in motion and you come up to a patch of gravel in the road, don't panic. It's best to maintain the momentum the motorcycle already has and slow down gradually, with very light use of both brakes. Your tires will slide easily, even on a light gravel surface, so if you brake too hard too fast you'll likely produce a skid, lose control of the motorcycle and you may go down.

There are all types of gravel conditions. Part of deciding to ride through gravel is assessing the kind of terrain you're faced with. Hard packed gravel is best, while loose sand is the worst. Roadside pullouts laden with gravel are actually a good place to practice your gravel riding skills because, so long as there's no drop or gap between the pavement and gravel, you can stay headed in one direction as you enter and exit the pullout while practicing smooth throttle control.

When the road ahead promises miles of gravel, you can turn around and find another route, or you can use these techniques to get through it.

Physically:

- Keep your arms and shoulders relaxed, and steer the bike without fighting against it.
- Use a gradual throttle roll-on to accelerate and

maintain a steady speed, which will most likely be a reduced speed. Try not to stop, but if you have to, start out again by using very light, gradual acceleration, so your tires don't spin out.

- Keep the motorcycle as straight up as possible, that is minimize lean, which may mean taking wide turns and using most of the road.
- Keep as much distance between you and other vehicles as possible to allow yourself a lot of extra room to gradually slow down to a stop.
- Remember the rule that you go where you're looking, so avoid looking down. Stay focused on where you want to ride to, but continually scanning near and far, checking the road surface conditions so you're aware of any big rocks or potholes to avoid. Looking far ahead will keep you heading in the right direction.
- Remember to breathe slowly with controlled breaths to keep your body calm so you don't tense up. WRN Editor Genevieve Schmitt advises using a Pilates breath. "I'm a Pilates instructor so I'm always using my 'Pilates breath' to get me through tense situations calmly—like riding in gravel. Pilates breath is done by breathing in through the nose, and out through the mouth. This kind of breathing is best for controlling your breathing pattern so your body stays calm. The calmer you are, the more your mind will remember what to do so your body can respond appropriately to move you through the gravel successfully.

Mentally:

- Tell yourself you will get through this.
- Listen to your inner voice. If you're feeling confident then go for it. If the voice in your head says to turn around and you can, then listen to it.
- Don't allow any negative thoughts to invade your brain like how bad it is to ride through gravel or that you will fall. If you employ the above techniques, you're likely to power right through and be celebrating that you did so before you know it.

ABATE of Alaska, Inc is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the rights and promoting the safe riding practices of Alaskan motorcycle enthusiasts.

ABATE of Alaska is a freedom of choice organization. We embrace the maxim “Let Those Who Ride Decide.” We believe that the rider is best able to decide the type of motorcycle to ride, and the type and extent of safety gear worn. Our objectives include monitoring motorcycle related legislation locally and nationally; offering affordable rider safety courses as prescribed by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation; and demonstrating our commitment to civic affairs through charitable measures.

ABATE of Alaska offers activities and the brotherhood of fellow motorcyclists. We stand for the rights of ALL motorcyclists to ensure that we and our children will be able to enjoy the freedoms we hold so dear. Membership is open to everyone interested in preserving personal freedoms.

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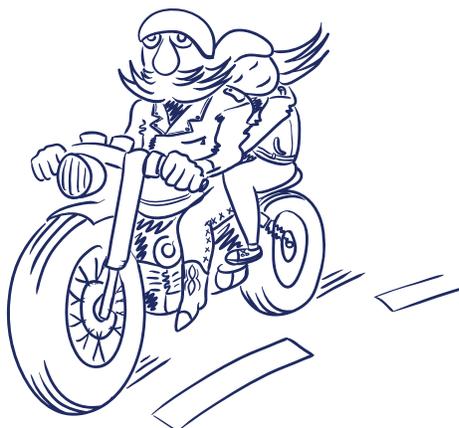
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