

ABATE ADVISOR



ALASKA DOT & PF RECOGNIZES MOTORCYCLE AWARENESS MONTH

Vol 2013, Issue 2

(Juneau, AK) Alaska Statute 44.12.118 designates the month of May as Motorcycle and Motor Scooter Awareness month. During this time – and during the rest of the year – the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) would like to remind motorists and other road users to: Help share in the responsibility of keeping all road users safe, by safely “sharing the road.”



“As the weather improves, more and more motorcyclists are hitting the roads,” said Tammy Kramer of the ADOT&PF Alaska Highway Safety Office. “And with that in mind, pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers of all vehicles, including SUVs, passenger cars and trucks, need to be extra attentive and make sure they ‘share the road.’ A motorcycle is one of the smallest vehicles on our roads, often hidden in a car or truck’s blind spot. Every driver needs to aggressively look for them before changing lanes or merging with traffic.”

Changing the driving habits of motorists and motorcyclists alike will help decrease the numbers of motorcyclists killed and injured in crashes. Motorcyclists are reminded to make sure that they are visible to motorists, and that they follow the rules of the road. All road users are reminded to never drive, ride, walk or bicycle while distracted.

Motorists and bicyclists should perform visual checks for motorcyclists by checking mirrors and blind spots before they enter or exit a lane of traffic, and at intersections. Pedestrians should also get into the habit of scanning for motorcyclists who might be hidden by other traffic.

“Motorcyclists have responsibilities, too,” said Kramer. “They should obey traffic rules, be alert to other drivers, never ride while impaired or distracted, and always wear protective gear.”

Research from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration indicates that a motorcyclist is more vulnerable than a passenger vehicle occupant in the event of a crash. Per vehicle mile traveled, motorcyclists are about 39 times more likely than passenger car occupants to die in traffic crashes.

The Alaska Highway Safety Office offers tips for drivers to help keep motorcyclists safe on our roadways.

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Alaska DOT&PF Recognizes Motorcycle Awareness Month

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- Remember, a motorcycle is a vehicle with all of the rights and privileges of any other motor vehicle.
- Always allow a motorcyclist the full lane width—never try to share a lane.
- Perform a visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or exiting a lane of traffic, and at intersections.
- Always signal your intentions before changing lanes or merging with traffic.
- Don't be fooled by a flashing turn signal on a motorcycle – motorcycle signals are often not self-canceling and riders sometimes forget to turn them off. Wait to be sure the motorcycle is going to turn before you proceed.
- Allow more following distance - three or four seconds - when behind a motorcycle so the motorcyclist has enough time to maneuver or stop in an emergency.
- Never tailgate. In dry conditions, motorcycles can stop more quickly than cars.
- Never drive while distracted.

THE ANGRY SQUIRREL

I never dreamed slowly cruising on my motorcycle through a residential neighborhood could be so incredibly dangerous! Little did I suspect. I was on Brice Street - a very nice neighborhood with perfect lawns and slow traffic. As I passed an oncoming car, a brown furry missile shot out from under it and tumbled to a stop immediately in front of me.

It was a squirrel, and must have been trying to run across the road when it encountered the car. I really was not going very fast, but there was no time to brake or avoid it -- it was that close. I hate to run over animals, and I really hate it on a motorcycle, but a squirrel should pose no danger to me. I barely had time to brace for the impact. Animal lovers, never fear.

Squirrels, I discovered, can take care of themselves! Inches before impact, the squirrel flipped to his feet. He was standing on his hind legs and facing my oncoming Victory Touring Cruiser with steadfast resolve in his beady little eyes. His mouth opened, and at the last possible second, he screamed and leapt!

I am pretty sure the scream was squirrel for, "Banzai!" or maybe, "Die you gravy-sucking, heathen scum!" The leap was nothing short of spectacular. He shot straight up, flew over my windshield, and impacted me squarely in the chest. Instantly, he set upon me. If I did not know better, I would have sworn he brought 20 of his little buddies along for the attack.

Snarling, hissing, and tearing at my clothes, he was a frenzy of activity. As I was dressed only in a light T-shirt, summer riding gloves, and jeans this was a bit of a cause for concern. This furry little tornado was doing some damage! Picture a large man on a huge red/white and chrome cruiser, dressed in jeans, a T-shirt, and leather gloves, pattering at maybe 25 mph down a quiet residential street, and in the fight of his life with a squirrel. And losing...

I grabbed for him with my left hand. After a few misses, I finally managed to snag his tail. With all my strength, I flung the evil rodent off to the left of the bike, almost running into the right curb as I recoiled from the throw.

(Continued on page 3)

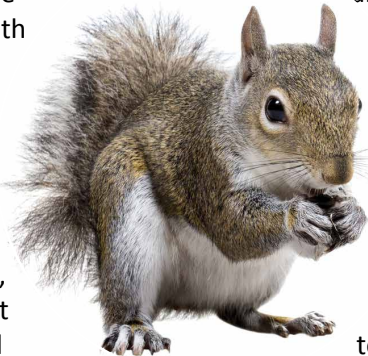
The Angry Squirrel

(continued)

That should have done it. The matter should have ended right there. It really should have. The squirrel could have sailed into one of the pristinely kept yards and gone on about his business, and I could have headed home. No one would have been the wiser. But this was no ordinary squirrel.

This was not even an ordinary angry squirrel. This was an EVIL MUTANT ATTACK HURLING PROJECTILE SQUIRREL OF DEATH! Somehow he caught my gloved finger with one of his little hands and, with the force of the throw, swung around and with a resounding thump and an amazing impact, he landed squarely on my BACK and resumed his rather antisocial and extremely distracting activities. He also managed to take my left glove with him! The situation was not improved. Not improved at all. His attacks were continuing, and now I could not reach him. I was startled, to say the least. The combination of the force of the throw, only having one hand (the throttle hand) on the handlebars, and my jerking back unfortunately put a healthy twist through my right hand and into the throttle. A healthy twist on the throttle of a VICTORY can only have one result: Torque.

This is what the Victory is made for, and she is very, very good at it... The engine roared and the front wheel left the pavement. The squirrel screamed in anger. The Victory screamed in ecstasy. I screamed in. well.. I just plain screamed! Now picture a large man on a huge red/white and chrome cruiser, dressed in jeans, a slightly squirrel-torn t-shirt, wearing only one leather glove, and roaring at maybe 50 mph and rapidly accelerating down a quiet residential street on one wheel, with a demonic squirrel of death on his back. The man and the squirrel are both screaming bloody murder. With the sudden acceleration I was forced to put my other hand back on the handlebars and try to get control of the bike. This was leaving the mutant squirrel to his own devices, but I really did not want to crash into somebody's tree, house, or parked car. Also, I had not yet figured out how to release the throttle...my brain was just simply overloaded. I



did manage to mash the back brake, but it had little effect against the massive power of the big cruiser. About this time the squirrel decided that I was not paying sufficient attention to this very serious battle (maybe he was an evil mutant NAZI attack squirrel of death), and he came around my neck and got INSIDE my full-face helmet with me. As the faceplate closed part way, he began hissing in my face. I am quite sure my screaming changed intensity. It had little effect on the squirrel, however. The RPMs on the Victory maxed out (since I was not bothering with shifting at the moment), so her front end started to drop.

Now picture a large man on a huge re/white and chrome cruiser, dressed in jeans, a very raggedly torn T-shirt, wearing only one leather glove, roaring at probably 80 mph, still on one wheel, with a large puffy squirrel's tail sticking out of the mostly closed full-face helmet. By now the screams are probably getting a little hoarse.

Finally I got the upper hand ... I managed to grab his tail again, pulled him out of my helmet, and slung him to the left as hard as I could. This time it worked ... sort-of. Spectacularly sort-of ... so to speak.

Picture a new scene. You are a cop. You and your partner have pulled off on a quiet residential street and parked with your windows down to do some paperwork. Suddenly a large man on a huge red/white and chrome cruiser, dressed in jeans, a torn T-shirt flapping in the breeze, and wearing only one leather glove, moving at probably 80 mph on one wheel, and screaming bloody murder roars by, and with all his strength throws a live squirrel grenade directly into your police car.

I heard screams.. They weren't mine... I managed to get the big motorcycle under control and dropped the front wheel to the ground. I then used maximum braking and skidded to a stop in a cloud of tire smoke at the stop sign of a busy cross street. I would have returned to 'fess up (and to get my glove back.

(Continued on page 4)

The Angry Squirrel

(continued)

I really would have. Really... Except for two things.

First, the cops did not seem interested or the slightest bit concerned about me at the moment. When I looked back, the doors on both sides of the patrol car were flung wide open. The cop from the passenger side was on his back, doing a crab walk into somebody's front yard, quickly moving away from the car. The cop who had been in the driver's seat was standing in the street, aiming a riot shotgun at his own police car. So the cops were not interested in me. They often insist to "let the professionals handle it" anyway.

That was one thing. The other? Well, I could clearly see shredded and flying pieces of foam and upholstery from the back seat. But I could also swear I saw the squirrel in the back window, shaking his little fist at me.

That is one dangerous squirrel. And now he has a patrol car. A somewhat shredded patrol car but it was all his.

I took a deep breath, turned on my turn-signal, made a gentle right turn off of Brice Street, and sedately left the neighborhood. I decided it was best to just buy myself a new pair of gloves, and a whole lot of Band-Aids, and a new pair of underwear.

Author unknown



Caption?

New Mobile App Takes Guesswork Out of Auto Accident Reporting

(Juneau, AK) – The Alaska Division of Insurance (DOI) is offering a free mobile app called WreckCheck that will help drivers in the event of an auto accident.

The new WreckCheck mobile application, developed by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), outlines what to do immediately following an auto accident and takes users through a step-by-step process to create their own accident report. It also provides tips for staying calm, safe, and smart on the road, and makes it easy to capture photos and document the necessary information to file an insurance claim. Additionally, the app lets users email a completed accident report directly to themselves and their insurance agents.

The app is free and available for both iPhone® and Android® smartphone users by clicking on the WreckCheck link on the DOI website at: www.commerce.alaska.gov/ins or http://www.insureuonline.org/auto_page.htm.

A survey from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) reveals that many consumers are unsure about auto accident best practices, such as when to call the police or what personal information to exchange with the other driver after an accident.

Drivers generally need only share their names and correct vehicle insurance information, which should include the phone numbers of insurance providers. Sharing additional personal information, such as driver's license numbers and home addresses, puts consumers, their property and their safety at risk. When there is a crash resulting in either an injury or total property damage of \$2,000.00 or more, filing an Alaska Motor Vehicle Crash Form is required. This PR 13-11 Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development 2 report is not required if the crash was investigated by a peace officer. The form can be downloaded at: <https://www.dot.state.ak.us/12209/ak12209blankform.jsp> and is also available from the 'Forms' link directly from the DOI home page.

Alaska's Division of Insurance regulates the insurance industry in Alaska. For more information, visit www.commerce.alaska.gov/ins/ or call 1-800-467-8725 or 1-800-INSURAK. The Division of Insurance along with the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, the Regulatory Commission of Alaska, the Division of Banking and Securities, and the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing are DCCED agencies tasked with protecting consumers in Alaska. For additional information about DCCED, please visit www.commerce.alaska.gov.

Laura Goggins

Attention custom motorcycle riders

Anchorage's finest have started the 2013 riding season with measuring the seat height to handlebars and writing tickets if they are more than 15" above the seat. Alaska law allows handlebar height to be at the riders shoulder level; Anchorage does not.

Ride Safe

Havoc

Protect your privacy from event data recorders

URGE YOUR REPRESENTATIVE TO SUPPORT FEDERAL LEGISLATION!

U.S. Reps. Mike Capuano (D-Mass.) and Jim Sensenbrenner (R-Wis.) will introduce the *Black Box Privacy Protection Act* soon and are currently seeking to add original cosponsors.

The bill will protect motorcyclists' rights by requiring dealers to prominently disclose to consumers if an event data recorder, known as a black box, is installed in their motorcycle, the data collection capabilities of such a device, and how such data may be used. The bill clarifies that the owner of the motorcycle owns the data and it may not be accessed without the permission of the owner. Furthermore, this bill requires that manufacturers provide consumers with the option of controlling the recording function in future automobiles or motorcycles that are equipped with black boxes. In other words, the ability to turn the black box on or off. Currently, no federal law exists that clarifies the rights of vehicle owners to ownership of the recorded data.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking requiring black boxes in all cars manufactured after Sept. 1, 2014. The NHTSA already has disclosure requirements, but the Black Box Privacy Protection Act would make the disclosure more prominent and give consumers even greater choice and privacy protections.

The American Motorcyclist Association protects motorcyclists' freedom to ride and we support this bipartisan bill. If you are worried that your insurer will use data from a black box to increase your rates or have the ability to record data that can be used against you in a civil or criminal proceeding, then you—the motorcyclist—should urge your representative to become an original cosponsor to the Black Box Privacy Protection Act. Just follow the "Take Action" option to send a pre-written email directly to your representative.

Boyd

REMEMBER!!

Current ABATE members may advertise items for sale for FREE in the ABATE newsletter!!! Send me your ads and notices of events for publication!!!



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Helmet Communication in Alaska

Until the fall of 2012 motorcyclists in three states were prohibited from using helmet mounted communications equipment while riding. Alaska motorcyclists are now free to talk between rider and passenger and other bikers without using cryptic hand signals or shouting.

This regulation change did not happen overnight and is the direct efforts of motorcyclists being involved with organizations that have experience in working with lawmakers such as your local ABATE, AMSAC (Alaska Motorcycle Safety Advisory Committee), MRF (Motorcycle Riders Foundation) and the AMA (American Motorcyclists Association).

It made sense to us that communicating electronically while group riding or monitoring a new rider with a learners permit, not only increases the ability to pass along important instructions and information, but it's safer than not having it!

Havoc

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.



Non-Skid Striping ???? On The Highways?????

State of Alaska, Dept. of Transportation, has a financial performance incentive of about \$50,000.00 for crosswalk skid resistance as a test pay item in its contract for work around Diamond Blvd., Anchorage. The raised stripping, usually white, in crosswalks, and highway dividers get slick when wet and many motorcyclists have gone down when making a turn into/onto slick, wet stripping. The Alaska DOT is not sure if the current composite/mixture will work or not as far as preventing skidding of motorcycles, or if it will improve the stripes, or if it will wear down at the same rate as the asphalt, but it does open the door for an improvement in non-sliding and gives the contractor an incentive. A friction aggregate which can be top-coated into stripes or next to stripes was seen as very promising, but there's a lot to learn, and the specs for this method have not been seen as yet. This is an incentive to contractors rather than restricting them. We'll see what they propose. They do have ideas.

It's nice to know that the motorcycle community is being thought of and for that we have Craig Breshears representing AMSAC in a 2009 letter reporting skid concerns to the Commissioner and Tucker Hurn from DOT.

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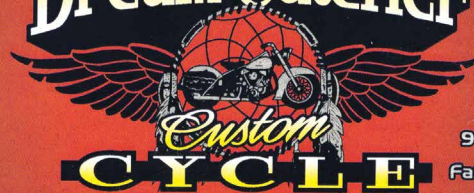


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2013 ABATE MOTORCYCLE CLASS SCHEDULE

Barb Smart, Alaska Leather

**** CLASS SIGN UPS** can be found at www.abateofalaska.com

You can contact Alaska Leather for more information by dialing 562-2324.

**** LEARN TO RIDE ALASKA.** There is a new Facebook page for the motorcycle classes. Please go there and "like" it.

The Alaska Biker Run Calendar is BACK!!! The akbikerruns.com calendar is back up and running!!! It is accessible on the abateofalaska.com's website. Please email all runs to Barbara Smart, Alaska Leather, or to the email on the bottom of the run calendar.

There are openings in all classes still!!! Sign up NOW!

Ride Safe and Free

Rod Taylor, ABATE Legal Services

ABATE is one of the greatest rights organizations ever; but what it reaches for, by far exceeds what it has achieved, and what it has achieved is magnificent.

Remember, injured ABATE members pay only 28½% of total recovery and expenses as approved by client, consistent with and conforming to applicable state law. Elsewhere, you may pay 33½%, 40% or even 50% of your recovery. And, 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 (800) 25-RIDER

If you have any questions you would like to ask the lawyer, please submit them to ASK OUR LAWYER, at rodtaylor@abatelegal.com. © 2012, ABATE Legal Services

MOTORCYCLE RIDERS FOUNDATION



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It's time you did something more to protect your rights!

JOIN AND SUPPORT Motorcycle Riders Foundation

REGISTER, VOTE, WRITE AND RIDE!

☐ Annual Individual Membership \$30

☐ 3-Year Individual Membership \$80

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ABATE of Alaska

Business Membership Application

Business Membership Policy

A business membership will be established to benefit both the members of ABATE and our business partner.

Business membership will cost \$60.00 per year.

The benefits to ABATE members will be a discount on all merchandise and services from the participating business if they choose to provide a discount. The discounts that are offered by a participating business would be listed in the business member section of the newsletter.

The benefit to the business member will be:

- A free monthly business card ad in the newsletter and 25% off on all additional ads placed in the newsletter.
- ABATE will also list the business members in a section of the newsletter identifying them as a business member.
- ABATE will provide a certificate for the business to hang in their store identifying them as a business member.
- ABATE will provide Tri-Folds and holders to the businesses for displaying ABATE information on their countertops (if requested).
- ABATE will provide at least 10 copies of the newsletter and a holder to the businesses for countertop display (if requested).
- ABATE will display the business's logo identifying them as a business member on the ABATE web page, and provide a link to their web page (if applicable).

Business Name _____ E-mail Address _____

Contact Person _____ Website Address _____

Type of Business _____ No. of copies of the Advisor ☐5 ☐10 ☐15 ☐20 ☐25

Physical Address _____ Discount to Members ☐5% ☐10% ☐15% ☐20% ☐_____ %

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☐ Annual Membership \$60.00

☐ 3-Year Membership \$150.00

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**ABATE of Alaska
P.O. Box 92213
Anchorage, AK 99509-2213**

Would you like ABATE info for your countertop?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you like to have an ABATE Web link?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you willing to make a tax-deductible cash donation for ABATE projects? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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**ABATE General Membership Meeting is at the Sea Galley,
C St. on the 3rd Thursday of every month, 7:00 PM**

June 2013

ABATE of ALASKA APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

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