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**May is Motorcycle Awareness Month**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has declared each May; "Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month."



The NHTSA is trying to bring more motorcycle awareness to those drivers who aren't riding motorcycles. NHTSA says, "Over two-thirds of fatal motorcycle crashes involve a motorcycle and another vehicle." For those of us who travel the city streets daily, we know quite well that most of our attention is spent on anticipating what the other driver will do.

You can help bring awareness to the increasing number of motorcyclist on the road by joining me in bringing more knowledge to our non two wheeled friends. Take the month of May to talk to your friends and family who may or may not realize you ride a bike. Maybe if we can bring a more personal connection to motorcycling, people will eventually realize that we aren't just a bunch of leather wearing troublemakers.

>> NHTSA Website

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**Tips for Driving "Biker Friendly"**

LOOK for riders. So often you will hear that a driver "never saw" the motorcyclist that they hit. As surprising as it may seem that you wouldn't see a vehicle, even if you looked right at it, a surprising study by Dr. Arien Mack shows that it is a real phenomenon. The fancy name for this is Inattentional Blindness, and the result is that people see what they are looking for and screen out everything else. When driving, people are looking for cars, and consequently do not see motorcyclist, bicyclists or even pedestrians. We all know that this can lead to deadly consequences. So when you are driving, PLEASE look for any on coming traffic or bystanders...they may very well be there!!!



For more information on inattentional blindness and the video in which participants didn't notice a guy in a gorilla suit in the middle of the screen, visit here:

>> [http://viscog.beckman.uiuc.edu/djs\\_lab/IB.html](http://viscog.beckman.uiuc.edu/djs_lab/IB.html)

Don't tailgate! Rear ending a rider can KILL

Don't cut off that motorcycle! Even if you are frustrated, even if you are in a hurry, no matter what, give riders space. Remember that you are only a few feet from that person's body.

WAIT! You are misjudging their speed! You assess vehicle speed all the time on cars and judge when we have enough time to go or when we should wait for the traffic to pass. This judgment of speed is actually based on the visual mass of the vehicle. Cars are bigger than motorcycles, and as such, motorcycles appear to be going slower than they actually are. If you see a rider, you have less time than a car at the same perceived rate of speed. So, just wait and let the motorcycle pass if you have any doubts.

Give riders extra room.

Watch for riders in groups and try not to separate riders.

Motorcycles are entitled to a right of way. A person operating a motorcycle is entitled to the same rights and right of way as a car. So often drivers will disregard motorcyclists right of way. For example, if a motorcycle is turning left and they got to the stop sign first, the motorcycle goes first...just like a car.

Motorcycles are entitled to their own lane. Motorcycles are entitled to their own lane on the road...a whole lane. You wouldn't drive in a lane with another car, you wouldn't push a car off to the shoulder, and it is against the law to do it to a motorcycle.

Lane sharing is legal in California! Lane sharing allows motorcycles to go between two lanes of traffic to the stop light or along side stopped traffic on the freeway. This is LEGAL IN CALIFORNIA. Many drivers dislike this, but it is totally legal and is actually a good thing. With traffic in California being such a problem, lane sharing allows more vehicles to pass and keep from further congesting the roads. Also, for riders being in front of traffic is always the safest place to ride. People who are not looking for riders or who drive distracted don't see riders and often change lanes into them. Being in front minimizes the potential dangers from traffic, so move over and allow that rider to pass at the light

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Road Rage can KILL a rider. Rider's sometimes do rude things, just like drivers do from time to time. In a car, driving recklessly has a steel-framed cushion, a rider, however, is totally exposed. A stupid move to try to prove a point can take a life. It just isn't worth the consequences. Please drive sane.

for mike

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## **2009 MOTORCYCLE SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH PLANNER SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE**

*Note: before filling in the names of the Organization and Organization spokesperson, you MUST contact them to obtain their permission to use their names in this press release, and you must get their approval for the language of their quotations, and any changes or additions they may require. Only after this is done should you send out the press release.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]

CONTACT: [Name, Phone Number, E-mail]

### **[Local Organization] Promotes “Sharing the Road” with Motorcycles by Joining Efforts with State and Federal Partners** *May 2009 Proclaimed Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.*

[City, State] – Motorcyclists fatalities have steadily increased over the past decade. In fact, in 2007, there was a seven percent increase in fatalities from 4,837 in 2006, to 5,154.

That’s why [Local Organization] announced today that they are joining with other federal, State and local highway safety, law enforcement, and motorcycle organizations in proclaiming May 2009 as “Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.” All motorists are reminded to safely “Share the Road” with motorcycles and to be extra alert when driving to help keep motorcyclists safe. Motorcyclists are reminded to make themselves visible to other motorists in case other drivers are not looking out for motorcycle riders.

“As the weather improves, more and more motorcyclists are hitting the roads. And with that in mind, drivers of all vehicles, whether you’re driving an SUV, passenger car or truck, need to be extra attentive and make sure you “Share the Road,”” said [Local Leader]. “Motorcycles are some of the smallest vehicles on our roads, often hidden in a vehicle’s blind spot so everyone needs to really look out for them.”

It’s crucial that motorists always make a visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or leaving a lane of traffic and at intersections.

“Motorcyclists have responsibilities, too,” said [Local Leader]. “They should follow the rules of the roadway, be alert to other drivers, and always wear a DOT-compliant helmet and other protective gear.”

[Local Leader] said that motorcyclists are much more vulnerable than passenger vehicle occupants in the event of a crash. [He/she] said that research shows that per vehicle mile traveled, motorcyclists are about 37 times more likely than a passenger car occupant to die in a traffic crash.

[Local Leader] offered several tips for drivers to help keep motorcyclists safe on our roadways:

\* Remember the motorcycle is a vehicle with all of the rights and privileges of any other motor vehicle on the roadway. Always allow a motorcyclist the full lane width—never try to share a lane;

\* Always make a visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or leaving 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. And don't tailgate. In dry conditions, motorcycles can stop more quickly than cars.

[Local Leader] said motorcyclists can increase their safety by:

\* Avoid riding in poor weather conditions.

\* Wearing brightly colored protective gear and a DOT-compliant helmet;

\* Using turn signals for every turn or lane change, even if the rider thinks no one will see it;

\* Combining hand and turn signals to draw more attention to themselves;

\* Using reflective tape and stickers to increase conspicuity; and

\* Positioning themselves in the lane where they will be most visible to other drivers.

Our message to all drivers and motorcyclists is: make this the first year in recent years when motorcycle fatalities do not increase. Help to share in the responsibility and do your part by safely "Sharing the Road."

# For Car Drivers



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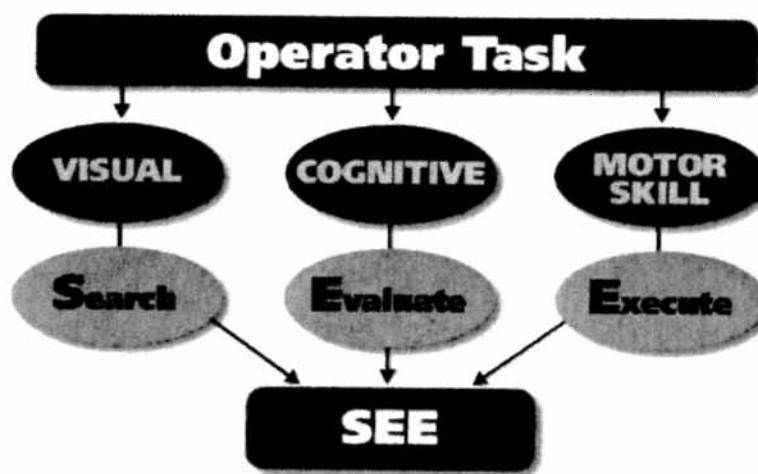
Additional Resources

Invest In Safety

### SEE<sup>SM</sup>: A Strategy for Managing the Risk of Motor Vehicle Operation

#### Overview:

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF), in its Basic *RiderCourse*<sup>SM</sup> (BRC) and other curricular products, promotes a three-part process with the acronym SEE (Search, Evaluate, Execute) as the core of a personal safe riding strategy (see diagram).



Operating a motor vehicle, especially on public roads, is not a passive activity but a complex task that involves more than just knowing how to use the accelerator, brakes, and steering. Motor vehicle operators require visual, cognitive and motor skills. In the chart above, these three distinct skills are transformed into three easily understood terms: Search, Evaluate, Execute. **Search** means to actively scan and identify factors that could create increased risk; **Evaluate** means to consider potential problems arising from the interaction of those factors; and **Execute** refers to the physical motor skills used to prevent or avoid the resulting hazards. (Please refer to the Appendix for an in-depth review of the use of the Search, Evaluate, Execute process.) An additional benefit of the three terms is that they form an acronym - SEE - that is easy to remember and is relevant to the driving/riding task in and of itself. The SEE process is applicable not only to the operation of any type of motor vehicle, but can work equally well as a risk-management strategy for bicyclists or even pedestrians interacting within a motor vehicle environment.

#### Analysis:

SEE is an active, thinking strategy that places responsibility on the motor vehicle operator to reduce risk by creating time and space in order to control a personal margin of safety. Besides being a simplified three-step process and easy to remember, SEE as a word acronym connects a thinking strategy with visual perception, which is dominant for safe vehicle operation. This is supported by the Hurt Report which stated in one of its recommendations and proposed countermeasures: "the need for the motorcycle rider to develop a traffic strategy so that he can SEE AND BE SEEN in traffic. This should be the most important component of any motorcycle rider training program."

#### Recommendation:

All car drivers should use SEE, which due to its simplicity and effectiveness may prove to be as beneficial in reducing traffic collisions as another well-known strategy that it complements, the "two-second rule."

Appendix: The Process of Search, Evaluate, Execute

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation is a national not-for-profit organization sponsored by BMW, BPP, Ducati, Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Piaggio/Vespa, Suzuki, Triumph, Victory and Yamaha.

# For Car Drivers



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### Ten Things All Car & Truck Drivers Should Know About Motorcycles



# 1

Over half of all fatal motorcycle crashes involve another vehicle. Most of the time, the motorist, not the motorcyclist, is at fault. There are a lot more cars and trucks than motorcycles on the road, and some drivers don't "recognize" a motorcycle - they ignore it (usually unintentionally).

# 2

Because of its small size, a motorcycle can be easily hidden in a car's blind spots (door/roof pillars) or masked by objects or backgrounds outside a car (bushes, fences, bridges, etc). Take an extra moment to look for motorcycles, whether you're changing lanes or turning at intersections.

# 3

Because of its small size, a motorcycle may look farther away than it is. It may also be difficult to judge a motorcycle's speed. When checking traffic to turn at an intersection or into (or out of) a driveway, predict a motorcycle is closer than it looks.

# 4

Motorcyclists often slow by downshifting or merely rolling off the throttle, thus not activating the brake light. Allow more following distance, say 3 or 4 seconds. At intersections, predict a motorcyclist may slow down without visual warning.

# 5

Motorcyclists often adjust position within a lane to be seen more easily and to minimize the effects of road debris, passing vehicles, and wind. Understand that motorcyclists adjust lane position for a purpose, not to be reckless or show off or to allow you to share the lane with them.

# 6

Turn signals on a motorcycle usually are not self-canceling, thus some riders (especially beginners) sometimes forget to turn them off after a turn or lane change. Make sure a motorcycle's signal is for real.

# 7

Maneuverability is one of a motorcycle's better characteristics, especially at slower speeds and with good road conditions, but don't expect a motorcyclist to always be able to dodge out of the way.

# 8

Stopping distance for motorcycles is nearly the same as for cars, but slippery pavement makes stopping quickly difficult. Allow more following distance behind a motorcycle because it can't always stop "on a dime."

# 9

When a motorcycle is in motion, see more than the motorcycle - see the person under the helmet, who could be your friend, neighbor, or relative.




If a driver crashes into a motorcyclist, bicyclist, or pedestrian and causes serious injury, the driver would likely never forgive himself/herself

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The Motorcycle Safety Foundation is a national not-for-profit organization sponsored by BMW, BPP, Ducati, Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Piaggio/Vespa, Suzuki, Triumph, Victory, and Yamaha.





OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE MORE  
VULNERABLE THAN THEY APPEAR.

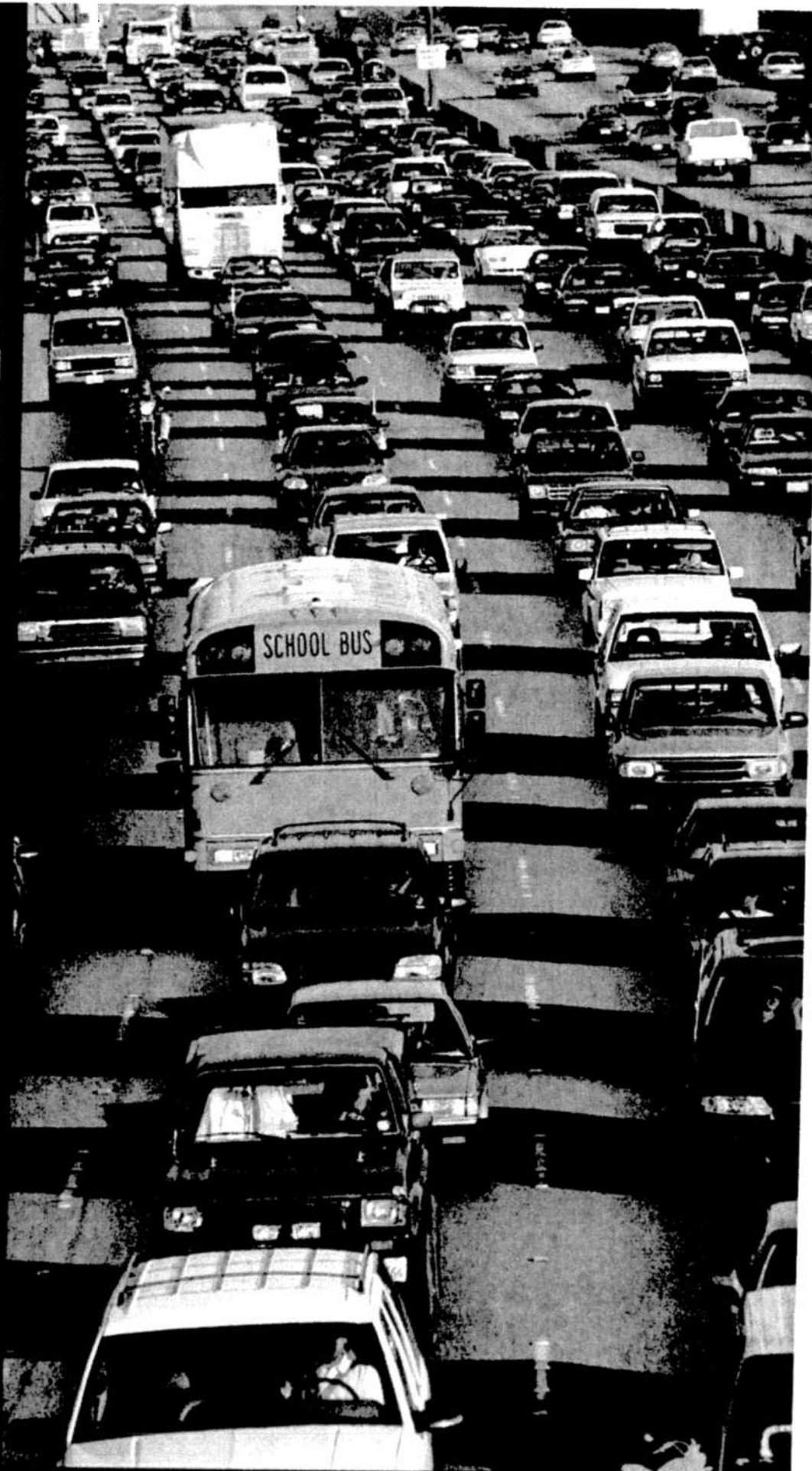


*Share the road with motorcycles*



**Spotting a  
motorcycle  
on the  
road can  
be just  
as hard  
as finding  
one in  
this picture.**

Keep an eye out  
for motorcycles



*Share the road with motorcycles*



TOUGH ON THE OUTSIDE.

SOFT AND SQUISHY ON THE INSIDE.



*Share the road with motorcycles*

