

Visibility

How many times have we read, or heard, the comment "I never saw the motorcycle?" That often repeated comment should be a wake up call to us all; and, we should make it our goal to do what we can to improve our visibility.

Looking out over the snow today, you can see much more of everything, mainly because the contrast of everything against the snow is greatly increased. This contrast makes everything more visible.

There are four areas we can act upon to help achieve this goal of improving our visibility by others. Making yourself more visible, making your motorcycle more visible, making your riding more visible, and making yourself and your machinery more visible when stopped near other moving vehicles.

There are many choices available to us all when we are selecting motorcycle clothing. It seems that all textiles now come in bright hues, and even leathers can be chosen which help us stand out in traffic. Whenever adding to our collections, we should consider the Hi-Vis Lime Yellow, or Green, with reflective material. They may appear less than fashionable at first, but you soon get used to them, and your friends soon stop the comments when they realize that everyone is looking at you as they pass. Many companies make hi visibility products, and all should be considered whenever making changes to our riding equipment.

Hi Vis colors are also available on many motorcycles, but that decision is a very personal choice. We all buy more "Safety Chrome" than we need, but should also consider altering our bikes with lighting which will make our bikes more visible, day and night. Modulating headlights like the type from Kisan Technologies are very effective, and can be seen from great distances. This "hundred dollars" gets more comments during daytime running than anything I have ever been exposed to. Driving lights, properly aimed so as not to alienate others, help improve visibility both ways at night. Additional tail-lights, marker lights, and modulating brake lights draw more attention when others are approaching from the sides and rear. Don't forget to keep tapping your brake while you are stopped so you don't blend in with stopped traffic in front of you.

Don't hide in traffic while riding. Always try to position your ride where it will be easier to be seen by others. Don't follow so close that other drivers can't see you in their mirrors, especially trucks and vehicles pulling trailers. Move to the most visible portion of your lane whenever you see approaching traffic from the front or sides. Always check in all directions when changing lanes, tapping your brakes, using hand signals, and eye contact to be sure others are aware you are there. Never, never, never ride in blind spots.

Move away from your motorcycle if it is disabled along the roadway. Not only will this get you farther away from moving traffic, but spreading out also increases your visibility. Try to get in the habit of parking your motorcycle in the rear portion of a pull in parking place, and the outside portion of a parallel spot, so that others see your bike before they try to occupy the same space.

Just remember that it is up to each of us to make ourselves, our bikes, our riding, and our parking more visible to others so that we never hear "I never saw your motorcycle."

Ride Safe.