

Warm weather puts OPP focus on motorcycle safety

Warmer weather brings an increase in motorcycle traffic – and an increase in concerns from police.

“It’s still early in the season and road and weather conditions can change quickly,” said OPP Commissioner Julian Fantino. “The good weather is great for riding but it also leads to increased car and truck traffic, and motorcycle riders need to be aware of other vehicles around them. It’s important to ensure your motorcycle – and you – are ready for the new season.”

Basic maintenance procedures and pre-ride checks, such as checking engine oil, tire pressure, and operation of lights, will ensure safe operation.

Police highly recommend a spring refresher – practising simple exercises in a parking lot to help reacquaint riders with their motorcycle controls and handling techniques. Wearing proper motorcycle gear such as an approved and fitted helmet, eyewear, footwear, gloves, long pants

and jacket will help reduce injuries, they said.

A motorcycle has a significantly smaller profile than a car or truck, so take extra measures to ensure you are visible, police said. Fluorescent clothing, light or white coloured helmets, and daytime headlights may help to reduce the chance of motorcycle injuries and death.

Riders are reminded to keep their heads up – looking as far down the road as possible – scanning for things to avoid, bumps in the road, garbage, potholes,

stones, spills and puddles, manhole covers and hidden intersections.

Group riding is increasingly popular and can be very enjoyable, if done safely. The OPP suggests that riders keep each group to a maximum of six riders.

“Always ensure you know your destination and have the most experienced rider at the front,” said Sgt. Lise Grenier, an OPP provincial motorcycle coordinator. “Always ride in staggered formation to allow for an escape route and to provide for ample

braking distance. Use hand signals to help your riding friends in pointing out hazards such as debris and wildlife.”

Motorcyclists are reminded that OPP will be watching for riders who are speeding, driving aggressively, weaving in and out of traffic and doing “stunts” while riding. Anyone caught doing 50 or more kilometres over the posted speed limit will have his or her motorcycle impounded on the spot and their driver’s license suspended for seven days, police said.



A motorcyclist cruises down an Essex street. With the warmer weather, the OPP are asking all motorists to exercise care with the increased traffic on Ontario roads.