

# THE SAFETY CORNER

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## AUGUST 2022 : GROUP RIDING

Group riding...when we ride in a group we ride in close proximity to each other. Each of us is responsible for the safety of ourselves, our bikes, and our rides. However, like the Borg Collective, what one does has an impact on everyone else in the group. This article couldn't be written ahead of time because it really depended on each of you!! We had a great interactive discussion at the August HOG meeting. Here

are some of the highlights.

I posed two questions to the group:

What's the one thing YOU do to make sure everyone is safe on a group ride?

What's the one thing you'd like OTHERS to do to make a group ride safe?

We had several people jumping right in! Thank you so much for that. It makes the discussion much more robust when Tom and I are not the only ones talking. J Special thanks to Patty Schaffer for jotting down the feedback during the meeting.

Here are the thoughts offered up by the membership for the first question – what do YOU do:

- Hand signals – I be sure to pass them back.
- I stay a good distance from the other riders.
- Ride in staggered formation.
- I pay attention to the things around me – other bikes, vehicles, signs, critters, etc.
- Maintain my bike.
- Obey the speed limits.
- Don't use drugs or alcohol while riding. Be aware of medication side effects.
- I stay focused on riding.
- ATGATT – All the gear, all the time!

Here are the thoughts offered up by the membership for the second question – what would you like OTHERS to do:

- Pass back the hand signals and hold them longer.
- Point out road debris.
- Keep the group tighter.
- Pay attention to their driving.
- Turn down the super loud music.
- Be respectful in communication devices.

Here are some other thoughts on strategies that help keep the group safe:

- Whether that spacing between you and other bikes is 1 second to the bike beside you, 2 seconds to the bike in front of you, or at another interval, be sure to ride your ride. Balance the spacing distance with not being too far apart as that encourages other vehicles to encroach upon and/or enter the group, which could be unsafe.
- Be consistent with your spacing regardless of the interval you use. This helps minimize the yo-yo or rubber band effect within the group.
- Keep the chatter to a minimum when several riders share communication systems. The RC and Gunner need to be able to communicate freely and sometimes quickly. The RC exchanges need to be the priority to keep everyone safe.
- Trikes – when I'm the Road Captain leading a group, I have found that trikes are very hard to see around and it is also hard for people behind the trikes to see the signals they pass back. So, when I lead, I ask that the first 4 bikes be 2-wheelers (i.e. the RC and 3 bikes) before trikes start lining up. I also ask that trikes ride staggered – to one side of the lane or the other rather than in the middle. Again, this is for visibility throughout the group. Finally, for the trike tri-fecta, I ask they be spaced out, again this is for visibility and safety not only of the trike riders, but for everyone in the group.

Remember, highway safety...especially group riding safety... depends on you! Whether you are a driver, passenger, or pedestrian, be observant and be adaptable to be safe!

**Tom and Karen**