

Special Situations – Pavement, Passengers and Cargo

Your margin of safety is directly proportional to your awareness and how well risks are managed. We live in an imperfect world and risk factors will interact in such a way that develops into hazardous situations. We need to manage these risks with knowledge and a good riding strategy.

The most important safe riding strategy is to pay attention, in other words use the Search (be on the lookout), Evaluate (what if?) and Execute (take some action) strategy. Here's some common situations related to pavement where we need to "pay attention".

- Rain slick surface – the road is most slippery during first few minutes of rain due to oil and dirt combining with water and floating on surface. Hydroplaning can occur with lots of water and/or minimal tire tread. Slow down or take a coffee break to minimize risk.
- Loose surface and debris – there can be all kinds of debris on the road such as sand, rocks, gravel, trash and liquids. Use the SEE strategy.
- Crack sealant and tar strips – they are slippery in hot weather, recognize them early and adjust lane position.

Passengers affect the way a motorcycle handles. Give yourself more time and space when carrying a passenger. Some tips:

- Adjust suspension and tire pressure.
- Keep both feet on the ground and front brake applied while the passenger mounts. Have engine started and transmission in neutral.

For cargo consider the weight, location and security. Keep weight low and as close to the center of the motorcycle as possible. Be sure load is secure by using accessory racks and luggage designed for the motorcycle. Secure loose items with bungee cords and web straps.

There are a lot of situations we as motorcyclist encounter. The best strategy to manage the risks is pay attention by using the SEE strategy.

Catching a yellow-jacket in your shirt at seventy miles per hour can double your vocabulary. -Author Unknown

Safety Officer

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