

Hot weather riding safety newsletter.

While most of us are fair weather riders, and we prefer warmer temps, too much heat is not good either especially if you do not prepare your body and your bike for it. Here are some tips and best practices I have found over the years.

- **STAY HYDRATED!** If you are riding, usually one of the first things we do prior to leaving is to check the weather. If you notice that there are high temps for your trip, it's a great idea to start to hydrate. Water is usually your best bet. Most of us love DR. PEPPER and maybe even GATORADE or POWERADE but there is no substitute for good old fashion cold water. I usually consume at least ½ gallon at a minimum the day prior to my day of riding in the sun.
- **Wear sunscreen!** Sunburn is painful. Most riders think that a short sleeve shirt will be the best way to keep cool on a hot day. The exact opposite is true. Long sleeve or even a mesh riding jacket with cold weather inserts removed is usually the best bet. Jeans and boots/ safe footwear are not up for debate, they are a must. Sunscreen on the face, nose and the back of the neck should be applied, and on any area that is exposed to the direct sunlight. I usually keep a can in my saddlebags. Check the expiration date on your sunscreen as it loses its protection qualities when it gets old.
- **Check your tire pressures.** Heat is a tires worst enemy. An under inflated tire will run hotter than it should and will run the risk of blowout. Proper inflation on hot days is a must. (I have a service rig I use for my primary job. If anyone wants, I am willing to come to your home and check your pressures with my rig if we need to. Just ask.)
- **Pay attention to the riders around you in your group.** Looking and paying attention for signs of heat exhaustion. Here are the signs to look for:

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion

- Confusion.
- Dark-colored urine (a sign of dehydration) you will have to judge for yourself!!
- Dizziness.
- Fainting.
- Fatigue.
- Headache.
- Muscle or abdominal cramps.
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- NO SWEAT on your body.

If your riding partner complains of any of the above symptoms sit them down and start the hydration process. This goes for pinion riders too. If necessary, seek medical attention which usually comes in the form of intravenous hydration.

You may find yourself "zoning out" or feeling tired in your helmet. If this happens, it's time to stop. Wave the group over and let's get you alert again. At meal stops, don't overeat. This is a great way to get tired in the heat.