

First Ride of the Spring

Rick Londagin
LSV Safety Officer

Greetings all;

Winter time is usually the time to do the annual preventive maintenance (p/m) on our preferred mode of transportation, the beloved motorcycle. That p/m work usually (or should) include the flushing & changing the clutch & brake fluids, rear end final drive oil, engine oil & filter, & air filter.

Hopefully you pulled the speedometer cable, cleaned the old grease out & applied fresh new grease and also got the clutch & throttle cables as well. You might want to consider a new fuel filter too. With the conception (or more like indigestion) of ethanol blended gasoline I hope you used a stabilizer in the gas tank if you stored your bike for the winter.

Did you think about hose inspection? What about brake lines? Are they in good condition? What about all the lights, are they all working?

What about the tires? You may be thinking there is still got plenty of tread left on the tires. That may be so, but have you inspected them real close? Have you given the tires a real good look on the sidewalls & into the grooves? Is the rubber starting to crack in the grooves?

So, all the tedious work is done, everything checks out OK, and everything is working as it should. The weather has finally given in to some beautiful riding.

Reality sets in; you need that "fix" for cabin fever. There is that sudden sense of urgency to get that cure for "cabin fever". You feel your hands start to tingle & itch, your butt is anxious to get settled in the saddle, your heart is pumping that ultra high 100 octane blood through out your body. You've donned all your gear, turn the key on, hit the start button, the machine fires right off.....YEEEEEE HAWWWWWWWW !!!!! here we go.

Not so fast there, Evil! Hang on a minute. Your bike is ready, but are you?..Mentally are you ready?

"Heck yes, I'm ready" you say...or some form of that verbiage.....No, I mean are you really "MENTALLY READY"?

Have you thought about where you are going, what route you are taking, what are the potential hazards you might face? You are not the only person in a hurry to get out and enjoy the weather.

If you've had to do some maintenance work on your bike, you should find an area such as a parking lot that provides ample room to take your bike through the paces and check the operability of the bike.

You should also do some refresher practice on slow speed maneuvering, U-turns & quick braking techniques before you get out in the asphalt jungle. It almost a certainty that these things get a little rusty, dusty, crusty, and a bit out of "synch" with some time off during the winter.

Until next time;

Fuel-em up, Rev-em up & enjoy the open road