

# ROAD FURNITURE

Mark Welch — Safety Officer

We have all had an encounter with it at one time or another. Road furniture is anything that is in your path ahead of you that is not supposed to be there. Lumber, bags of trash that fell from a vehicle, black alligators (the tread from the tire of an 18 wheeler), even dead animals are some examples of road furniture. So what is a biker to do when encountering road furniture? Basically, we have two options, swerve or ride over the object.

Let's talk about swerving first. A swerve on a motorcycle is performed by two quick presses on each handgrip in rapid succession. So if you were to swerve to the right first, you would press on the right handgrip (last month's article talked about what happens when you do that) followed by a press on the left handgrip.

Your body should stay upright, independent of motorcycle lean, unlike when you are cornering. The first press causes you to miss the road furniture and the second press puts you back in your original path of travel. Since you are using up the traction you have available by steering the motorcycle, you should avoid any braking while swerving.

The second option is to cross over the object. It is important to remember to try to cross the object at a 90-degree angle. If you try to cross the object at less than 90-degrees, it may redirect your motorcycle instead of the motorcycle crossing the object. Crossing the road furniture will take a little timing and rhythm. You will want to rise up off the saddle to allow your knees to work as shock absorbers and keep the im-

pact with the object from jarring your spine. Just before your front tire reaches the object, bump the throttle.

A brief acceleration will cause the weight of the motorcycle to shift toward the rear and off of the front tire. Once the front tire is over the object, roll off the throttle. If the rear tire is under power when it goes over the object, it may propel the object away from the motorcycle and cause the rear tire to lose traction.



It should be noted that if you are paying attention to the roadway ahead of you, you should have ample time to observe the road furniture and take evasive action without having to swerve or cross the object. So remember, don't ride with cranial-rectal inversion. Or more commonly known as DWHUA which stands for driving with head up, well, you get the idea.

Head and eyes!

Mark