

Antelope Valley Harley Owners' Group Chapter Rider's Guide



WELCOME!

Welcome!

Welcome to the Antelope Valley Chapter of HOG. The intent of this document is to give everyone the information required to ride together safely. Please, keep in mind these guidelines are not intended to restrict your freedom, but instead, help ensure we as a group ride and return home safely.

These guidelines are just that and cannot encompass every possible set of circumstances. They are intended to serve as a basic guide for most situations. That being said we expect each member of the chapter, driver and passenger, to read, understand, and apply these guidelines; and most of all use their best judgment in any situation that may arise.

REMEMBER: YOU HAVE THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR SAFETY, AND ALWAYS RIDE WITHIN YOUR CAPABILITIES AND THAT OF YOUR MACHINE.

INDIVIDUAL RIDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Will observe the objectives and guidelines in order to assure the safety and welfare of every individual within the group, and any surrounding motorists or pedestrians.
- Will follow the instructions of the Road Captains in all situations, unless those instructions place the rider or any other individual in an unsafe situation.
- Will maintain the motorcycle and other equipment in safe riding condition.
- Will ride with headlights ON and in High beam.
- Will ride with a 'safety first' attitude. The safety of all individuals, whether or not they are part of the group, is of paramount importance.

MEETING PLACE AND DEPARTURE TIMES

A rider briefing will be held just prior to departure, which will establish a schedule for gas and rest stops. It will inform the group of the intended route, provide other pertinent information, and review the group riding guidelines to include formation, spacing, and procedures.

Individuals should make every effort to arrive on time and be completely prepared for the scheduled departure time, this includes fuel, passenger, and any items you wish to carry along.

RIDING FORMATION AND INDIVIDUAL POSITIONS

The standard formation, under good road conditions (road, traffic, and weather) will be a double row, staggered (zig-zag formation), in one traffic lane. The interval will be no less than two seconds between staggered riders.

The Lead Road Captain will be at the head of the group and will ride in the position to the left of the double column. Other Road Captains will be assigned positions within the group, and the last rider in any formation will be the rear Road Captain or commonly referred to as the 'Sweep'.

Each rider should maintain his or her starting line up position in the group until arrival at the destination. This allows each rider to become familiar with the riding style and habits of those nearest his/her position in the group; this is particularly important for new members or new riders.

The Lead Road Captain will put you in the order he/she wishes the group to proceed. The reasoning behind this is so they have a balance of riders and he/she has a mental picture of the position of each rider. Additionally, the Lead Road Captain will place an additional Road Captain approximately in the middle of each group.

If you are assigned a group do not 'pirate' another group after it has begun to depart. This breaks the placement of riders the Lead Road Captain has established. Also, it is an unsafe practice to veer into a moving column.

Groups will be limited to 12 motorcycles, this includes Lead, Middle, and Rear Road Captains. This maintains a manageable grouping of motorcycles. The Lead Road Captain has the leeway to deviate from this guidance as situations present themselves, i.e., a ride that is attended by only 14 motorcycles for example.

The Lead Road Captain will signal, under certain road conditions, the group to form a single file formation. The signal is the left arm held overhead with one finger extended. Riders will begin to drop back to a safe following distance from the rider in front of them, and establish a single file formation.

New members, guests, and any riders with little experience in group riding will be positioned at the rear of the group just ahead of the Rear Road Captain.

The Lead Road Captain will have the responsibility to determine if smaller groups are required due to safety considerations: surrounding road conditions, changing weather concerns, local ordinances, etc. The Middle Road Captain are authorized to slow down their portion of the group and take the Lead Road Captain position when these and other circumstances present themselves.

The Lead Road Captain may choose to separate the group(s) into experienced and inexperienced riders, consistent with expected or actual road conditions.

✓ **FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LANE POSITIONS AND HAND SIGNALS, PLEASE, REFER TO THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER.**

SPEED, INTERVALS, AND DISTANCES

The Lead Road Captain will attempt to establish and maintain a uniform speed, consistent with the ability of the least experienced rider, surrounding conditions, and safe riding practices.

All riders will make an effort to maintain the same speed to minimize the effect of irregular speeds on riders at the rear of the group. This is commonly called the 'bungee effect'; when this occurs the group is too large. At the next gas or rest stop the Lead Road Captain will break the group into a more manageable size.

Within the group a safe following distance is defined as a minimum of two-second delay between the rider and the next rider directly ahead. This means there is a minimum of a one second delay between staggered riders.

A visual cue to adequately judge a safe interval between you and the bike to your left or right in the zig-zag formation: if you can see the driver's face in his/her mirror, you are properly spaced. This will mean the bike directly in front of you in formation will be approximately 2 to 3 seconds ahead, which establishes that spacing in the previous paragraph.

Whenever a single file formation is directed, a safe distance remains defined as a minimum of a two second delay between rider, and the rider directly ahead.

NOTE: IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THAT A TWO SECOND INTERVAL IS A MINIMUM SAFE REQUIREMENT IN ORDER TO REACT IN THE EVENT OF A HAZARD OR SITUATION, NOT TO STOP.

IN GROUP RIDING, A ONE SECOND INTERVAL BETWEEN STAGGERED RIDERS IS A POLICY CONSISTENT WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF MOST TRAFFIC AND SAFETY AGENCIES WITHIN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA. STAGGERED MOTORCYCLES ARE CONSIDERED TO BE IN A 'VIRTUAL' LANE OF THEIR OWN, THAT IS THAT THERE IS A TWO SECOND INTERVAL BETWEEN MOTORCYCLES IN A DIRECT LANE. THIS GROUP RIDING TECHNIQUE REQUIRES ALL PARTICIPANTS TO CONSTANTLY ANTICIPATE AN EMERGENCY.

A safe lane position is defined as riding immediately to the right or left of lane center. This will keep the riders just off the center oil stain, while maintaining the staggered formation, distance between riders and other obstacles, and providing necessary lane protection (riders who regularly ride on the outside edge of a lane are often subject to automobiles committing lane sharing violations while at speed).

TRAFFIC LANES

The Lead Road Captain will attempt to lead the group in a single lane; when the traffic flow appears to be most consistent with the speed of the group. The Lead Road Captain will change lanes only when necessary to pass slower traffic or to avoid a hazardous condition, and to avoid blocking faster approaching traffic.

Highways with two lanes each direction the group will normally travel in the number two lane, also known as the slow lane; this allows faster traffic to pass to the left of the group.

Highways with three or more lanes in each direction, the group will normally travel in the number two lane, keeping the right lane open for other vehicles entering and exiting the highway, and the left lane open for faster traffic.

The Lead Road Captain will anticipate entering traffic on highways with two lanes, and based on conditions will attempt to maneuver the group to the left lane until well past the entering traffic. This allows the group to avoid encroachment by other vehicles into the group, which could potential introduce braking or speeding up or lane changes to avoid the entering vehicle(s).

LANE CHANGES AND PASSING

On multi-lane highways the row staggered, or zig-zag, formation will be maintained.

The Lead Road Captain will hold his/her position and signal for a lane change.

All riders will hold their positions and pass the signal to the rear with both hand and light signals.

The Rear Road Captain will change lanes at the first safe opportunity, protecting the lane for the group and allowing the Lead Road Captain to see the lane is clear and protected.

Changing lanes uses the 'follow the leader' approach. The Lead Road Captain will change lanes first followed by all other riders moving from the front to the rear of the group.

NOTE: NO ONE EXCEPT THE REAR ROAD CAPTAIN/SWEEP IS TO CHANGE LANES BEFORE THE LEAD ROAD CAPTAIN.

ALWAYS MAKE A HEAD CHECK BEFORE YOU BEGIN THE LANE CHANGE, AND MAINTAIN A SAFE DISTANCE.

There are times it will not be possible for the entire group to change lanes as above. When this situation arises the Lead Road Captain will signal for a turn, and signal the group with one finger extended into the air. This indicates the changing lanes as a group is not possible. The Lead Road Captain will then change lanes when safe to do so. Everyone signals, head checks, and changes lanes front to back, as individuals, when safe to do so. Should the group become separated or spread out, regrouping will be done when it is safe to do so.

On a two-lane road with two-way traffic (one lane each way) a single file formation should be used when passing other vehicles. On occasion, the Lead Road Captain may continue in the passing lane, while safe to do so, allowing other riders to see that the way is clear for them to continue the group-passing maneuver.

If for any reason the group becomes separated, merge safely back to the pack, returning to your original position, using good safety practices. Don't feel it is necessary to break land speed

record to catch up. The Lead Road Captain is aware of the situation and will be adjusting accordingly, your speed could endanger yourself or others.

GAS, FOOD, AND REST STOPS

The Lead Road Captain will address the group prior to departure: gas, food and rest stops. If you believe you need stops sooner than mentioned by the Lead Road Captain, the time to bring that up is during his/her briefing.

Deviations from the scheduled stops may be required due to varying weather, traffic, and other conditions.

Gas and rest stops should be limited to no more than fifteen minutes.

Meal stops will vary in length, however, the Lead Road Captain should give consideration when two or more groups are traveling to plan meal stops where more than one eatery is available to the groups.

UNSCHEDULED OR EMERGENCY STOPS

Unscheduled stops for gas, restrooms, rider fatigue can lead to confusion in the group, and confusion can lead to accidents. The Lead Road Captain should be informed that a stop is necessary in order to lead the group in an organized fashion to the next convenient and safe place to stop.

Road Captains are equipped with radios and will inform the Lead Road Captain of riders indicating with hand signals their needs (fuel, rest, etc).

Any rider with an equipment problem should inform one of the Road Captains as quickly and as safely as possible.

The Lead Road Captain, once notified, will bring the group to a safe stop as soon as possible.

If a rider pulls over immediately, ONLY the Rear Road Captain will accompany that rider to a stop. The Lead Road Captain will be notified of the situation and will bring the group to a safe stop when practical.

Any rider observing a problem with another rider's equipment should inform the rider as quickly and as safely as possible and practical.

ACCIDENTS

In the event the group rolls upon an accident the Lead Road Captain will stop the group at the earliest possible moment. It may become necessary for the group to disperse and park separately to avoid creating additional hazardous conditions.

Riders will remain under the control of the Road Captains at the scene of an accident. Members may be directed by the Road Captains to lend assistance to the situation: first aid, traffic control, going ahead for communications with emergency teams and law enforcement. If you believe you can not participate please inform the Road Captain requesting your assistance, then remain by your motorcycle.

Road Captains and other members have cellular phones and will make every attempt to make contact with police, fire, or rescue and ambulance crews to notify them of the emergency situation.

Maintain order and preserve the accident scene for police investigation. Again, most members as well as Road Captains carry cameras, take pictures of the accident to aid in the investigation.

If a hit and run accident is observed, members WILL NOT attempt to chase anyone in any vehicle. You, serve the police by obtaining what we believe to be the make/model of the vehicle and the license plate number. Obtain names and addresses of witnesses if necessary.

Maintain overall control of the situation until relieved by proper authorities.

Accidents involving the group will be handled as follows:

Once the accident comes to a stop, Road Captains with radios will notify the Lead Road Captain, if he/she is not involved, of the situation. The Lead Road Captain will bring the remainder of the group to a safe stop as soon as practical.

The Road Captains will maintain communication until such time it is conveyed to all Road Captains who and how many members of the group are involved and an assessment of the extent of injuries.

The Lead Road Captain will then begin to communicate to police, fire, rescue, and ambulance crews that an accident has occurred and the location and to his/her best knowledge the extent of injuries. The Lead Road Captain will then notify the other Road Captains that contact has been made with police, fire, rescue, and ambulance crews.

The Rear Road Captain, if not involved in the accident, will immediately attempt to contact the Lead Road Captain of following groups, if applicable, of the accident and any hazards that may have led to the accident.

Again the Road Captains, if not involved in the accident, will direct member participation for giving first aid, traffic control, etc. Additionally, the Road Captains must ensure communications are established between all Road Captains in that group and following groups or proceeding groups (communication to a proceeding group may be attempted via the radios or pagers and cellular phones).

If the Lead Road Captain is in an area in which a cellular phone does not work, he/she will contact the other Road Captains of the situation. He/She will gather the remaining members of

the group and proceed to point further down the road to attempt contact with police, fire, rescue, and ambulance crews.

Once communication with police, fire, rescue, and ambulance crews is established and the Road Captain making contact, in this situation is 'down the road' from the scene of the accident, he/she will appoint a temporary Road Captain to maintain group leadership, as he/she returns to the scene to inform the remaining Road Captains that police, fire, rescue, and ambulance crews have been notified and provide any instructions they may have given.

The Lead Road Captain will then assess with the guidance of the Road Captain on scene which riders are not necessary to maintain first aid or traffic control, and will lead them to the assembly point of the remaining group. The Lead Road Captain will then remain with that group.

HAND SIGNALS

Standard hand signals will be used for changing the formation to a single and back to double/staggered, all turns, lane changes, slowing, and stopping, identifying road hazards, and turn signals. Additionally, illuminated turn signals will also be used at all times.

All signals will be relayed to the rear of the group to allow all riders to take appropriate precautionary measures, and be aware of changes in speed and direction.

Left arm held high, one finger extended overhead indicates single file and extended following distance.

Left arm held high, two fingers extended overhead indicates the standard staggered formation.

Left arm held high, moving in a circle indicates a U turn.

Left arm held high, one finger extended overhead, followed by the Road Captain signaling and changing lanes, indicates:

The Road Captain will move as an individual, to whatever maneuver or position required. The group will follow as individuals, in a 'follow the leader' fashion, signaling and following the Road Captain as appropriate and safe to do so.

- ✓ **PLEASE, REFER TO THE CHAPTER'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND DETAILS ON HAND SIGNALS.**

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- Motorcycles will arrive for rides in good running order.
- Serviced with fuel.
- Riders are encouraged to maintain a well-stocked tool kit.

- Riders are encouraged to maintain a first aid kit.
- Riders are encouraged to have a detailed map.
- Water is encouraged to be packed aboard the bike, as well as some foodstuffs.
- Cellular phones are encouraged, and if you are in possession of a cellular phone notify the Lead Road Captain you have one and the number.
- Pagers are important to aid in contacting other groups, in multi-group rides, of the need to be contacted.

ROAD CAPTAINS

Road Captains have the most important jobs in the chapter, they are entrusted with maintaining good order and safe driving habits.

Road Captains provide for the safety and welfare of all individuals within the group and any surrounding motorists and pedestrians.

Road Captains lead the group(s) to its destination and back in a well organized, disciplined, and safe manner.

Road Captains will attempt to avoid road hazards.

RECOMMENDED QUALIFICATIONS

- ❑ Maintain a current State of California motorcycle license.
- ❑ Maintain current and valid motorcycle registration and insurance.
- ❑ First Aid/CPR certification/training.
- ❑ Successfully complete a CMSP or MSF, Experienced Riders Course.
- ❑ Completion of the HOG Chapter's Road Captains Course.
- ❑ Complete two probationary training rides.

ROAD CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

LEAD ROAD CAPTAIN

Has full and undisputed charge and control of the group until arrival at destination.

Will lead the group in a manner consistent with the objectives and guidelines as stated in this document. Will execute to his/her best judgement in situations not specifically covered in this document.

Will brief the group and other Road Captains as to: route, responsibilities, and other details prior to departure.

Will place riders in their positions within the group.

Will be responsible for the final decision with regard to ride termination due to inclement weather, hazardous conditions, or other difficult or unsafe conditions.

Will instruct any rider in a specific position within the group, or direct the rider to leave the group entirely, for reasons of misconduct, disorderly or unsafe riding, or faulty or unsafe equipment.

Will have a first aid kit or insure one is available.

Will have a tool kit or insure one is available.

If possible, bring a cellular phone.

If possible, bring a pager.

If possible, bring a camera

Will be responsible for providing to the Chapter Secretary waivers signed by non-members or guests.

Will not consume any alcohol until the completion of the ride (the completion of the ride is defined as the destination).

Will establish and maintain a uniform speed consistent with the ability of the least experienced rider, and with consideration of safe road, traffic, and weather conditions.

Will not exceed the posted speed limit.

Will be responsible for initiating all maneuvers within traffic in a 'safety first' manner.

Will lead the standard staggered and single formations.

Will ride to the left of the column.

Will maintain a safe following distance by using the Minimum 5-second rule between the vehicle ahead, in either lane, fast or slow.

Will command the group to a single file formation when the Lead Road Captain is not able to maintain visual control of the road conditions ahead over a minimum of a 4 second distance, narrow road, traveling directly adjacent to parked vehicles, or any other condition which may severely restrict the ability of individual group members to perform emergency avoidance maneuvers.

MIDDLE AND REAR ROAD CAPTAINS

Will assist the Lead Road Captain.

Can assume Lead Road Captain duties during the ride due to circumstances.

Will have a first aid kit or insure one is available.

Will have a tool kit or insure one is available.

Will instruct any rider to ride in a specific position or manner within the group, or direct the rider to leave the group entirely, for reasons of misconduct, disorderly or unsafe riding, or faulty or unsafe equipment.

Will not consume any alcohol until the ride is completed.

If possible, bring a camera.

The Rear or Sweep Road Captain has added responsibility to make lane changes ahead of the rest of the group so as to protect the lane.

All Road Captains will be responsible to ensure waiver forms are signed and collected prior to the ride from non-members.

Welcome all riders and introduce riders to the Road Captains.

Define destination and outline the route.

Determine gas, rest and food stops enroute.

Review riding standards.

Most of all remind everyone to have fun to ride safely. Promote safety and common sense.