

## KHOG Safety Article, July 2017: "Can You Hear Me Now? - Part III"

"It's all fun and games until someone loses an eye!" How many times have you heard that said? How many times have you had that said to you? It feels like children these days hear that less and less as everywhere I go, kids aren't who they used to be. They aren't running around causing mischief or making road trips completely intolerable for parents because, when you see them, they are all doing one thing: Their face is stuck in a smartphone or tablet device of some sort playing games. Not much chance of losing an eye that way, but it seems so sad!

I'm not sure those children grow out of it either. As they grow into young adults, I see the ladies making faces into them, generating a wide range of facial expressions for photos of themselves. For some reason, it seems a large percentage of these photos appear with them sitting behind a steering wheel. I must have somehow missed where vehicle driver seats became a fashion statement, but they seem to be all the rage in these days of smartphone generated self-portraits.

Particularly troubling is the amount of people who use those smartphones, in vehicle driver seats, while the vehicle is in motion. I really wish there were a way to send electric bolts into a vehicle, in which the driver has their face buried in their smartphone, to disable that phone as that driver is one of the largest threats on the road today, especially if you are a motorcyclist. I dare say that this threat is more common to highway safety than even driving under the influence. Motorcycles are hard to see the way that it is, and to paraphrase the late, great John Wayne, "It's even harder when you're stupid" because you are looking at your phone and not the road.

Gosh, wouldn't it be nice if there a way that the smartphone could be used in a way to SAVE YOUR LIFE instead of only for games or selfies that make you look like barnyard animals? Would you believe that there is an application in your phone in which you can store your emergency contacts and medical information to be used in an emergency? Would you believe it is included and free? It is even accessible by emergency responders if you have a password lock on your phone.

The exact title of the application will vary by manufacturer, so you'll have to do some research to find it, or ask someone in your local mobile phone store! Depending on the amount of detail you wish to enter, it will take a only few minutes!

Saving your emergency information in your phone is a fantastic idea and has many advantages. If you are riding your motorcycle alone and are found unresponsive from an accident, or a medical condition, then emergency responders can quickly gather a list of life-threatening medical conditions (epilepsy, diabetes, high blood pressure), drug allergies (sulfa, latex, penicillin), medicines you take, as well as those you have designated as emergency contacts! It eliminates the guesswork that EMS providers sometimes have to do and decreases the amount of time it takes to provide definitive care!

If you are riding with others, either on your bike, or on other bikes, share with them how to access that information as well so they may pass on the information to 9-1-1 operators or EMS.

What if you don't have a smartphone, or it is damaged in a motorcycle accident, or you simply don't trust your medical information in a smartphone (yet, are the type to make duck-face pictures and post them up to social media)? A good habit to get into is to have all that information written on a piece of paper and carried next to your driver license in your wallet or in a waterproof case slung loosely around your neck. Remember the SLABCAB assessment we have previously discussed? During patient assessment, your information will certainly be found around your neck in case of an emergency! In fact, there is an entire industry bracelets and necklaces that are worn by those with life-threatening conditions to alert emergency responders of potential causes if you are found unresponsive! If you have a medical condition (or motorcycle riding addiction) that could cause you to be found unresponsive, having redundant sources of information available through a written document, jewelry item, or in your smartphone can very well be something that allows you to stay alive!

Next month, we will talk through the mindset and conversation of making a call for emergency help when dialing "9-1-1". It will be important to think through things like your location and explain what has happened that requires assistance.

In the meantime, take 10 minutes before you ride to do a T-CLOCS check on your bike, sign up for a rider skills course, stash your phones away, and live to ride another day.

....and "Hey! Let's be CAREFUL out there!"

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