

Freedom on the Open Road with the Security of Insurance

GOTCHA COVERED

By Greg Knuffke of Tamarack Insurance

"On a motorcycle, nobody ever asks,
'Are we there yet?'"
Stacy Westfall

It was a tough winter but we made it through! The days are getting longer our world is turning green and the smell of pine and wildflowers permeate our cool spring days. The highways and mountains of Montana are calling, and me must go. It's time for us to fire up our riding toys and hit the open roads and trails that await.



We live in great times where technology and outdoor activities have merged to forge toys that makes it even easier to commune with nature including: four-wheelers, dune-buggies, Razors, ATV's and hi-tech motorcycles. The technology and creature comforts can sometimes lull us into a false sense of security. Lest we forget, we are still running our ATV's in hostile territory where a wrong turn can cause serious loss.

Consider these alarming statistics:

- Motorcycle crashes cause over \$18 Billion in losses per year¹
- 1028/100,000 registered motorcycles & ATV's result in injuries compared to 451/100,000 with private passenger vehicles²
- More than 1 in 4 riders in losses are under 18 years of age³
- The average cost for injuries due to motorcycle/ATV accidents not involving a head injury is over \$15,700 and if a head injury is involved it increases to over \$45,000³

1- Government Accountability office (2017)
2- IIHS (2017)
3- NHTSB (1999)

Why buy motorcycle insurance

It's pretty simple, just like with automobiles, motorcycle insurance is required by law. Besides that, it can save you from a catastrophic loss should you have an accident that causes injuries, not to mention the full value of your motorcycle in the event it is damaged or stolen. And, if you have a loan or lease, the lender will compel you to purchase insurance. *The average cost for full coverage is about \$420*

Why buy ATV insurance

Unlike auto insurance, most states do not require you to carry insurance

on your ATV unless you license it for road use. Montana is one of few states that allows ATV/4-wheelers to be registered for road use but you may be required to purchase certain coverage if you are financing your all-terrain vehicle. Regardless, if you are uninsured and get into an accident, you may be liable for all damages and/or injuries incurred. So while ATV insurance is often not required, it can be a wise investment. *The average cost for full coverage is about \$280*



Recommended Risk Management Steps:

Reduce risk with Safety:

- 1. Use Motorcycle Helmets:** Helmets have been shown to be very effective in preventing deaths and reducing injuries and cost of injuries for motorcycle riders.
- 2. Employ Antilock Braking Systems (ABS):** Stopping a motorcycle is more complex than stopping a car. Motorcycles have separate brakes for the front and rear wheels, and braking hard can lock the wheels and cause the bike to overturn. With ABS, a rider can brake fully without locking up. The system automatically reduces brake pressure when a lockup is about to occur and increases it again after traction is restored.
- 3. Training:** Several motorcycle organizations improve motorcycle safety through education, training and licensing but working with states to integrate safety and skills into licensing tests and promoting operators to wear protective gear, especially helmets, ride sober and ride within their skill limits. Riders who complete approved safety courses are eligible for insurance discounts.

Insure against Risk:

- 1. Purchase medical payments insurance** of at least \$10,000
- 2. Liability limits** of at least \$25,000 per person and \$50,000 per accident
 - a. If registered for road use, you must have at least this much
 - b. a motorcycle or ATV probably can't cause much damage to another vehicle so here you are more concerned with hurting other occupants of your vehicle
- 3. Uninsured/Underinsured motorist coverage** of at least \$25,000/\$50,000. Considering some motorcyclists and few ATV operators carry insurance you want to be protected if hurt by another that collides into you.
- 4. Collision & Comprehensive coverage**
 - a. If you financed the vehicle, you are compelled to carry this coverage
 - b. If the value of your vehicle exceeds 5X's your annual premium, it is a good idea (of course your deductible may play a factor here - higher the deductible, the lower your rate will be)

Insurance for our toys is considerably less than for automobiles and if it can provide security and peace of mind, it is well worth it. Get Lost in Montana! MW

Greg Knuffke is a former insurance executive with over 30 years of experience in all facets of insurance. Greg worked for some of the largest companies before retiring to the Flathead Valley to open Tamarack Insurance, a family business that is licensed to sell all lines of personal and business insurance. When Greg isn't working, you can find him outdoors; skiing, boating or playing street football with his ten children.