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The Sweet Sound of Motorcycling

Aftermarket Exhausts Are Getting Quieter

With jurisdictions around the nation cracking down on excessive motorcycle sound, streetbike riders are clamoring for aftermarket exhaust pipes that deliver both performance and pleasing-yet-relatively quiet exhaust sound.

Now, aftermarket motorcycle exhaust system makers are delivering.

"It's great to see aftermarket exhaust system makers stepping up and offering quieter pipes that still have a pleasant sound, and the performance, that riders want," says Imre Szauter, AMA government affairs manager.

"The tide is turning, and streetbike riders, like dirt riders before them, are recognizing that loud pipes create a lot of problems for motorcyclists, from the bad impression it leaves with non-riders to outright bike bans on certain streets, in certain parks, and at private establishments," Szauter says.

BUB Enterprises, SuperTrapp, Vance & Hines and Yoshimura R&D of America offer performance streetbike systems that meet either federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) J2825 sound-testing procedure limits.

The SAE J2825 procedure is the standard that the AMA urges jurisdictions to adopt as part of a comprehensive strategy—which should include cars and other sources of noise—to deal with complaints about excessive sound. The SAE developed and adopted the J2825 sound-testing procedure—"Measurement of Exhaust Sound Pressure Levels of Stationary On-Highway Motorcycles"—with support from the Motorcycle Industry Council in 2009.

BUB (BUBEnt.com) offers the BUB 7 and BUB Straight 8 catalytic exhaust systems for Harley-Davidson FL touring models. The pipes meet California air emission standards and are federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sound compliant in all 50 states. That means they meet the 80-decibel limit mandated by the federal ride-by-test procedure.

SuperTrapp (SuperTrapp.com) has a variety of SuperTrapp and Kerker slip-ons for FLs that meet the SAE J2825 sound standard.

Vance & Hines (VanceAndHines.com) also offers 50-state EPA sound-compliant mufflers for FL models—EPA Compliant Twin Slash Slip-ons.

Yoshimura R&D (Yoshimura-RD.com), meanwhile, offers EPA sound-compliant slip-ons for a variety of bikes from the 2011 GSX-R 600 to the 2010 BMW R1200GS to the 2011 Kawasaki ZX-10R.

Driver Who Killed Four Motorcyclists Sentenced to Life

Another Driver Could Face A Similar Sentence

A 46-year-old Florida man who killed four motorcyclists when he crashed into them with his pickup truck has been sentenced to life in prison.

Paul Sermons of Oxford was charged in the deaths as well as with driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. He was sentenced on July 6 after being convicted in June.

In March 2010, Sermons was passing a slower-moving truck when he hit two motorcyclists head-on, killing the riders and their passengers.

In related news, a mistrial was declared in August in the case of an Arizona dump truck driver, Michael Jaksch, 46, of Scottsdale. Jaksch is accused of killing four motorcyclists and seriously injuring five other riders stopped at a red light in March 2010.

Prosecutors say they will try Jaksch again, but by pretrial no trial was set.

Jaksch was charged with four counts of manslaughter, five counts of aggravated assault and two counts of endangerment. In the trial that ended in a hung jury, prosecutors alleged Jaksch was under the influence of methamphetamine during the crash.

If convicted, Jaksch is expected to face a harsh sentence.

"These certainly aren’t the slap-on-the-wrist sentences that we have become accustomed to over the years when motor vehicle drivers kill motorcyclists in a collision," says Imre Szauter, AMA government affairs manager. "But something to keep in mind is that in both of these cases the drivers allegedly were under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

"We have found while monitoring cases like these around the nation that drivers under the influence of alcohol or drugs who kill motorcyclists get very stiff sentences," Szauter says. "Similar sentences are not always the case when drugs or alcohol aren’t involved.

"So while these two cases attracted a lot of attention among motorcyclists nationwide, they are no indication that we can expect similarly harsh sentences in all cases involving the deaths of motorcyclists," he cautions.