

Horses and Road Safety – Motorists Tips

Motorists, cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians all have the right to use Queensland's roads. This right comes with a responsibility to operate in a safe and courteous manner and within the law.

Whilst scores of riders would prefer not to use the road, there invariably are times when it cannot be avoided. As the population increases and access to forest trails and safe public riding areas is reduced, more riders are being forced to use roads. Unfortunately many riders and motorists alike are unaware of the potential dangers associated with this type of activity.

The consequences of ANYONE'S mistake can be horrific, EVERYONE is at risk!

Horse sense

Horses are 'flight' animals, this means their instinctive response to danger is often to run. They have extremely fast reflexes and can react so quickly that even experienced riders may be caught unprepared.

A frightened horse can run towards danger and this will put everyone at risk.



A Sobering Thought

Motorists should understand that the average horse weighs around half a ton (500KG) and their bodies are perhaps more than a metre off the ground. This puts their bodies higher than most vehicles' bonnets and therefore unlike colliding with other animals, a horse is more likely to miss the crumple zone at the

grill and come through the windscreen. Airbags may not be deployed and will be of little assistance to the occupants inside.



SO PLEASE..... Think before you act!

It is not always obvious to motorists why horses and riders are doing what they are doing but there is usually a good reason.

For instance, riding in pairs is not always so the riders can have chat. It is a very effective tool to school the young or nervous horse and rider.

AS A GENERAL RULE OF THUMB, it is best to assume both horse and rider are inexperienced. Proceed with caution!



PLEASE

- DO slow down to pass horses.
- DO stop and turn off your engine for restive/upset horses.
- DO take extra care around child riders.
- DO approach horses and riders carefully from behind and ensure they know you are coming.
- DO read our fact sheet on hand signals, to understand what the rider may be trying to communicate to you.
- AVOID making unnecessary loud or sudden noises and movements. And as a special request, truckies please
- AVOID using exhaust/engine brakes.

Most riders will appreciate your thoughtfulness.

For Further ROAD SAFETY Information

Visit the Queensland Horse Council website at the address below.