

Powersport Innovations debuts a high-tech motorcycle light

BY EVAN WILLIAMS ewilliams@floridaweekly.com



CEO Paul Grzebielucha watches as a Safety Light is installed.

One of the motorcycle industry's latest inventions, an LED light strip that comes on whenever a bike's g-forces start to drop, was developed right here in Southwest Florida. It's designed to cut back on accidents in which cars or trucks collide with motorcycles when they didn't see them slowing down soon enough.

Fort Myers-based Powersport Innovations patented the accessory in December. The light is a single strip and often fitted above and below the license plate. It's wired to a small device, sensitive to g-forces and installed out of sight. The light is activated whenever a rider slows down for any reason, at any speed.

It shines red with a distinctive strobe. So as not to annoy other drivers, the light goes out once the motorcycle is at a complete stop says Paul Grzebielucha, Powersport's president.

Mr. Grzebielucha says the light, called Safe Ride, could help stop deadly accidents that happen when drivers don't notice a motorcycle is slowing down or stopped until it's too late. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says about 20 percent of motorcycle accidents happen while riders are stopped or decelerating. Motorcycles stop more quickly and are less visible than other vehicles, which makes them an added risk.

The Safe Ride generally warns drivers one to four seconds before the brake lights would and the strobe makes the motorcycle's presence obvious to drivers coming from other directions. If a motorcyclist eases up on the accelerator, for instance, but doesn't use the brakes, the light will come on until she speeds up again.

The Safe Ride light was originally created for boats and personal watercraft. The motorcycle version sells for \$199, plus \$50 for installation.

"At this price range, we don't think anyone will duplicate our product," Mr. Grzebielucha says.

Powersport Innovations, a four-year-old company, plans to sell the Safe Ride lights and other products nationally. They also produce full-wave waterproof radios. Mr. Grzebielucha says private investors have shown interest in helping the company expand with brick-and-mortar locations in Iowa and California.

"Our goal is to at some point make this a public company," he says.

Mr. Grzebielucha debuted the Safe Ride light at Daytona Bike Week in March. So far, he's sold about 500 of the lights.

"The response I've gotten out of bikers is seven out of 10 love the idea," he said. "About 30 percent say, 'hey, I'm a tough guy. I don't need any extra lights

on the back of my bike.'"

Sanibel resident Bill Terry, who will soon ride his BMW motorcycle to his part-time residence in Pennsylvania for the summer, had one installed last week at the Powersport showroom on Summerlin Road.

"It was basically my own self preservation," he said. "I wanted to last another day."

The lights are also sold on beseenatnight.com and at

Horney's Custom

Cycles.

"So much as been put into motorcycle safety after the fact," Mr. Grzebielucha says, such as helmets and other gear. "We believe this is one of the first products that (helps riders) avoid collisions."

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles says 9,205 motorcycle crashes in 2007 resulted in 550 deaths.



[Click here to enlarge](#)



The Motley Fool



Get your questions answered about stocks, investing, and personal finance.



Pet Tales



Great tips on taking care of your pet. Also see the pet of the week.



If you have any problems, questions, or comments regarding www.FloridaWeekly.com, please contact our Webmaster. For all other comments, please see our contact section to send feedback to Florida Weekly. Users of this site agree to our Terms and Conditions.