

HISTORY

In the summer of 2004, local motorcycle rights enthusiasts voiced concerns about the way the Colorado Springs Police Department was enforcing the law relating to loud/altered exhaust systems. On August 22 and 23, 2004, both sides presented their positions to the Colorado Springs City Council. Mayor Lionel Rivera, directed both sides to form a working group and explore possible compromises. In September, the Mayor's Task Force, comprised of local motorcycle advocates, motorcycle dealership representatives, and members of the police department began meeting and discussing a range of related topics. One of the results of those meetings was this tri-fold, a hip-pocket reference to help you, the rider, avoid a noise ticket. Below are extracts from the Colorado Springs City Code.

properly maintained to prevent any excessive or unusual noise, smoke or flame, and no person shall operate a motor vehicle within the City which is not so equipped, or is equipped with a muffler cutoff, bypass or similar device. It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a motor vehicle with an exhaust system that has been modified in a manner, which amplifies or increases the noise emitted above that emitted by the exhaust system originally installed on the vehicle.

9.8.201: VEHICLE NOISE LIMITS

A noise measured or registered as provided in this article from any vehicles weighing less than ten thousand (10,000) pounds in excess of eighty (80) decibels in the A weighing scale in intensity is excessive and unusually loud and unlawful.

9.8.203: MODIFICATIONS PROHIBITED

It is unlawful for any person to sell, lease, rent or install any device or sell, rent, lease or operate any vehicle, engine, motor or other mechanical device with a device which when attached to or placed on any vehicle, engine, motor or other mechanical device so as to amplify or increase the noise emitted by it above that emitted by the vehicle, engine, motor or mechanical device in its original factory design.

10.22.204: EXHAUST SYSTEMS

Every motor vehicle shall at all times be equipped with an adequate exhaust

Q: Isn't the use of a noise meter the most accurate and correct method of measuring noise?

A: Yes, however the CSPD assures us that using those meters to test every bike suspected of exceeding the noise limit would result in more aggressive enforcement of the City Code.

Q: Does this mean I can't ride my customized motorcycle inside the city limits?

A: While it is clearly not in compliance with the City Code to operate a bike with modified exhaust in Colorado Springs, the riding community has been reassured repeatedly by the CSPD that riders who are considerate and courteous while riding should be ok.

Q: What constitutes riding in a considerate and courteous manner?

A: The answer to this question has many parts.

1. Ride in a manner so as not to draw attention to yourself or your bike.
2. Ride like the police are watching.
3. Go easy on the throttle/acceleration - RPM's down and a gear up.
4. Avoid noise sensitive areas.
5. Avoid aggressive riding tactics.

Q: What does the Motorcycle Rights Community think about all of this?

A: Plainly stated "extreme offenders" - those who choose not to consider their actions and the effects of those actions on others- cause increased enforcement activity.

Q: How is the loudness of my exhaust measured?

A: At present CSPD leaves this up to the officer's discretion. That usually means that if a CSPD officer is in his/her car with the window rolled up, and can hear your bike's exhaust noise above the street background noise, you could get a ticket.

Q: What are the locations of noise sensitive areas?

A: The CSPD receives over 5000 noise complaints per year and, while they don't track the location of each one, it is known that anywhere near the downtown area, Old Colorado City, and any residential street, are areas very sensitive to noise.

Q: What if I'm running straight pipes?

A: Riders who choose to operate these types of exhaust systems on public roads, without appropriate baffles, will face aggressive enforcement.

Q: What should I do if I need new pipes?

A: While the best way to avoid a noise citation is to use only OEM parts, this may be unacceptable to you for many reasons. The Mayor's Task Force will, in the future, test aftermarket pipes and publish a list of those systems that are deemed acceptable for use, if noise compliant options can be found. Dealers, shops, and parts suppliers will help you select pipes that are in compliance.

Q: If I replace my stock exhaust with a set recommended by the Task Force do I have a "free pass" from being cited?

A: No, our testing and years of riding experience has taught us that even stock exhaust systems can be operated in a manner that could cause our bikes to exceed the noise limit.

Q: What makes an exhaust system legal or illegal?

A: With a few exceptions, exhaust systems installed by the manufacturer are stamped on the bottom of the muffler as compliant with Environmental Protection Agency standards. The majority of aftermarket systems will be supplied to you with documentation stating that they are not legal for street use or have that information stamped on the pipe.

Q: Who do I contact for more information?

A: Link to any of the following web sites:

www.abateofcolo.org

www.ama-cycle.org

www.apexsportsinc.com

www.mrf.org

www.springsgov.com



Mayor's Task Force

Logos include: Colorado Springs Police, Bikers Dream, Apex Sports, Rocky Mountain Cycle Plaza, and Pro Promotions.

Ride Friendly

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2004

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