

CRASH



EXPERIENCE SINCE 1965



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EXCESSIVE MOTORCYCLE REPAIR COST

MECHANICAL OR BODY REPAIR, IT'S ALL THE SAME TO THE MOTORCYCLE DEALER.

Motorcycle dealers don't distinguish between body damage and mechanical damage. It's all the same to them. If a motorcycle requires internal engine repair the labor rate most likely will be upwards of \$75.00 per hour. If the motorcycle has been laid down and experienced a broken clutch lever, grip or foot peg the dealer charges the very same rate. To replace any one of the aforementioned parts does not require a qualified engine technician. In most cases the dealer will use a less qualified person or helper to change the parts. When the dealer is questioned as to how they can honestly justify charging so much on such a menial replacement (especially when any high school kid can remove a bolt, exchange the part and tighten the bolt back again), they come up with many lame excuses, such as, "We only have highly trained technicians" or "That is way we do it."

Another area that is of major concern is body impact damage. Dealers traditionally don't have facilities to repair a motorcycle fender, tank or scratched fairing. So what do they do? They simply use the rationale that it will cost more to repair the damage then to replace it while, of course, charg-

ing \$75.00 per hour rates. Automobile body repair facilities can repair most anything perfectly for \$36.00 per hour, so why can't the damaged motorcycle parts either be taken to an automobile repair facility or the complete motorcycle repaired by a body repair facility? They can, but the motorcycle dealer will not make the \$75.00 per hour to R&R the parts and the 40 plus percent in profit on the new parts plus the selling of the slightly damaged parts that are not destroyed but re-sold for half of new. It purely is not in their best interest. Never mind what is honest and in the best interest of everyone who pays insurance. It's lining their own pockets with money that drives their business practices.

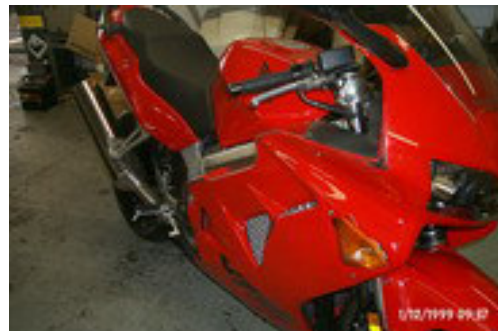
So who is trying to stop this excessive overcharging? Nobody. Consumers don't have any clout that will reverse or stop the rates from rising. The insurance companies have not made it a priority to say, "We are tak-



ing it somewhere else unless you agree to a reasonable rate" and the manufacturers are being held hostage having to pay high warranty rates. Nobody seems to know what to do or wants to do anything.

This investigator has had success in locating alternative repair facilities. They can buy the badly damaged parts from an authorized dealer like everyone else and make the repairs for less money. Considerably less money. Of course it is always easier to pay the high dollar and close the claim. A little more time in locating an alternative repair facility is well worth the estimator's time and certainly a substantial saving to the insurance company. If your estimator is just shuffling papers, maybe you need a new estimator.

by THOMAS BAILEY



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