



Cycle Siren: Clearing the Way

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It’s not very often I am so impressed by a product and the customer service provided by the manufacturer that I recommend it to others, but when it does happen, I am more than willing to pass on the information. Such is the case with the Cycle Siren and Greg Bohning, the product’s creator.

I came across my first Cycle Siren by chance. While I was visiting one of our stations, another sergeant showed me a system he had purchased for one of the bike officers. To say I was impressed was an understatement. At the time, my patrol bike did not have a siren of any type, and I was operating an older style, alternating halogen warning light system.

I am known as a “gadget guy”, and I try to make sure my patrol bike is outfitted with the most effective lighting and safety equipment on the market. Once I’d seen the Cycle Siren, I knew I’d found the newest addition to my handlebars. After some bartering with my colleague, the first generation Cycle Siren system made its debut on my patrol bike. That was quite a few years ago, and I’m pleased to report that I am still operating my original Cycle Siren system, which has performed without fail.

Since that time, I have been assigned as the Bike Patrol coordinator, which has enabled me to standardize uniforms, bikes, equipment, and training. I recently purchased several new patrol bikes, all of which are outfitted with the Cycle Siren *Patriot Mini-Siren* system (all blue emergency lights) with optional taillight and Fast-Charger.

The *Patriot Mini-Siren* provides two high visibility front daylight viewing combo LED strobe lights. The siren features wail and yelp variations, an electronic horn, and is programmable to enable phaser and hi-low sound variations. The optional taillight also provides high visibility daylight viewing with the above mentioned combo LED strobe lighting at a flash rate of four per second when operated in emergency mode (alternating red taillight with blue emergency light).

All functions of the Cycle Siren system are controlled by the handlebar-mounted tactile switch box. The unit itself is powered by a Ni-MH battery pack weighing in at only 7.5 ounces! Complete re-charge time is approximately eight hours with the standard charger provided with the system. The optional Fast-Charger is available as an add-on, and although these chargers advertise a complete re-charge of the system battery in three hours, I have been able to re-charge our systems in as little as 90 minutes!

Once the batteries are completely charged, they typically last a few weeks before needing another boost; this, of course, depends on the amount of use. The system switch box has a low battery indicator light that illuminates while there is still plenty of time to get that next charge without the system shutting down completely. Greg told me right up front that the system uses standard radio-controlled vehicle batteries, which are available at most electronic stores for about \$20. This eliminates the need for “proprietary parts” only available directly from the manufacturer, which sets the Cycle Siren apart from some of its competitors.

Cycle Siren systems are very versatile and can be easily transferred from one patrol bike to another or moved around on the same bike. The mounting system is simple: wire ties for the front lights and control switch, and a similar built-in system for the siren. The taillight comes with a lightweight aluminum bracket which can be bent slightly if needed, and a nut and bolt that fits easily under most rear racks.



The only challenges I faced when installing the system were having to attach a space bar underneath the handlebars and determining where to put the battery. In my agency, handlebar space is at a premium, so the space bar is a must; my bike actually has two, installed side-by-side. The space bar was the easy part; both Cycle Siren and a local bike shop sell them. They usually come in grey or silver, so if you need a black one – as we do – you may want to check before ordering.

The battery fits easily in the side compartment of the rear rack bag, but the zippers on our older bags are top-opening. After a few years of leaving the side compartment unzipped to allow the battery wires to run through, I finally broke down and cut a small hole on the underside of the side compartment and ran the wires underneath. This is something I should have done long ago since it looks much better and I didn't lose any of my storage capability.

One last thing, if for some reason you don't ride your bike for a few weeks, you might want to unplug the system from the battery. We've found that once the battery starts to get very low, and if you miss the glowing low battery indicator on the control switch, the siren will chirp intermittently to remind you.....it's time to ride again!

Cycle Siren offers a 10% discount to IPMBA members through the *IPMBA Product Purchase Program*. Various siren and light packages are available to meet your department's needs. Taillights, system batteries and chargers, and space bars are also available. Visit www.cyclesiren.com or contact Greg Bohning at (877) 477-4736. All products are covered by warranty; see the website for specifics.

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