

Burning Bright

INSTALLING PIAA'S PLATINUM LAMP KIT BY STEVE LITA

PIAA has been in business since 1963, the quality of its lights and harnesses being second to none. Even the company's mounting hardware is superior stainless steel, with Nylock-style nuts used for vibration resistance. That's why PIAA lighting is a mainstay in rally car and off-road endurance racing.

PIAA now has a line of lights for the power-sports market. Looking to improve my nighttime riding safety, I decided to install the Platinum 1100X two-lamp kit on my Kawasaki ZRX1100. Small and light, the kit comes with CNC-machined 6061-T6 aluminum fork leg mounting brackets that are model specific and cover a wide range of popular sportbikes and touring bikes. The 1100X-series lamps offer a larger, rounded light pattern so you don't lose the light when you're leaning into a turn. Each lamp's dichroic bulb has a glass reflector and a bulb assembly that lets heat dissipate through the reflector and away from the bulb, which helps increase its life. And the super-white, 55-watt bulb actually performs like an 85-watt one.

The supplied wire harness is top notch and features a switched power lead to activate the lamps. There are four ways to wire the lead: 1. Connect the harness to the ignition switch's positive wire so

 The PIAA web site (piaa.com) has a handy aiming guide that will help you set things straight.

the lights will operate only when the ignition is on; 2. Connect it to the high-beam wire so the lamps will operate only when the high beams are on (this is required by law in some states for highway use); 3. Connect it to the low-beam positive wire so the lamps will operate only when the low beam is on (also required by some states); 4. Do like I did and take the easy way out — connect it directly to the battery's positive terminal so the lamps will operate at any time. However, this method offers a higher risk of running the battery down if you forget to shut the lights off.

Take some precautions when you're doing an installation like this. Avoid having the accessory lamp switch in the on position when you're starting or shutting off the bike, as some bikes generate a voltage spike that may harm the lamp system. Also, these lamps get hot to the touch and take a while to cool down, so mount them away from plastic bike parts and wear gloves when adjusting their aim. The good news is that these PIAA lamps are covered by a limited lifetime warranty, except the bulbs, which are covered for 90 days.

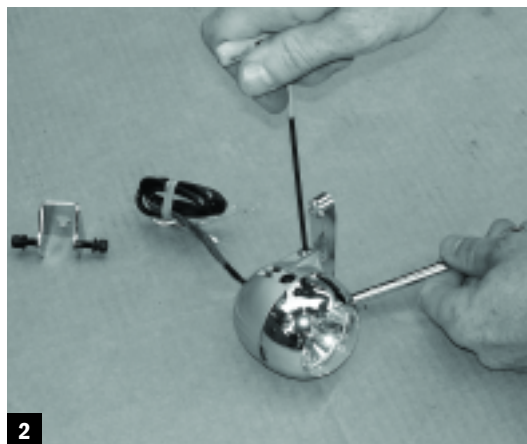
SOURCES

#74234-1100X \$262.95
PIAA CORPORATION
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Dept. RB
Beaverton, OR 97006
503/643-7422
piaa.com



1

The kit actually provides more components than you need. The hardware is made of high-grade stainless steel.



2

At your workbench, start by bolting on the aluminum brackets with the supplied hardware and nylon shims. Even when tight, the lamps should still pivot so you can aim them. Here, the original lamp bracket is shown removed.



3 Bolt the entire assembly to the bike's front fender. A longer stainless steel bolt is provided, and a drop of blue Loctite will ensure that it won't vibrate loose.



5 The waterproof switch mounts up near the grip with double-sided tape. A green LED shows power, and a red LED indicates when the lights are on. Be sure to allow for the full range of handlebar travel when you route this wire lead.



4 The pre-made wire harness attaches directly to the battery. There's an inline fuse and relay built into the harness. Run the wires under the tank to the front lamp's pigtails.



6 Tuck all wires away, leaving plenty of slack for suspension travel. I ran them along the brake hose and held them in place with zip-ties.



7 The PIAA lights are much brighter than the stock headlight and are easily adjusted for aiming. Just be careful when you're aiming them, as they throw off some serious heat. **RB**

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