

Newsletter

MAY 2008



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Summer Bicycling Safety

As the summer months approach and more of us head outdoors, bicycle safety, especially around motorists, becomes more of a concern.

Every year in the United States, about 900 deaths occur from bicycle-related injuries; another 500,000 people are treated in emergency rooms for injuries related to bicycles. The most serious injuries occur as a result of collisions with motor vehicles. While the majority of the injuries are superficial, head injuries cause the most fatalities and

long-term disabilities. According to the US Department of Transportation, about one-third of the deaths, and about two-thirds of the injuries, involve children under the age of 15.

With proper precautions, many of these deaths could be avoided. Children should be educated about the proper techniques to use while riding a bike. Likewise, motorists can be more alert to bicyclists and take extra precautions with children.

Remember: Maryland law requires anyone under 16 years old to wear a helmet while riding a bike.

Bicyclists should always wear a helmet. Helmets should fit snugly and comfortably around a rider's head. Additionally, bicyclists should make sure that their bikes are in good condition. They should wear clothing that is light in color, especially if riding at night. Children of all ages should not ride their bikes after dark



Partnership Updates and Upcoming Events

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Partnership hosted its second annual conference on May 16, 2008 at the Sheppard Pratt Conference Center. Fifty-four attendees were present for the keynote address by Mari-K Appy of the Home Safety Council, a presentation by Ted Miller of the Children's Safety Network and the 2008 presentation of the Community Safety Awards.

2008 COMMUNITY SAFETY AWARD RECIPIENTS

- STATE FARM INSURANCE
- BOAT US FOUNDATION
- R ADAMS COWLEY SHOCK TRAUMA
- PATUXENT SPORTSMAN FOR KIDS
- DELMARVA POWER
- FITZGERALD AUTO MALLS

CHAIR-ELECT

The Partnership for a Safer Maryland is once again soliciting nominations for the position of Chair-elect. Nomination forms can be found on the Partnership website and should be sent to the partnership e-mail address.



Keeping Bicyclists Safe on the Road

For Bicyclists

Protect Your Head

Wear a properly-fitting helmet. No more than two fingers should fit between your eyebrows and the bottom of the helmet. Always buckle the chin strap and make sure no more than two fingers fit between your chin and the strap.

Use Proper Equipment

Be sure that you are riding a bicycle that is the proper size for you. When standing over your bike, there should be 2-4 inches of space between you and the top bar.

Follow the Rules of the Road

Bicycles are considered vehicles on the road. Always ride with the flow of traffic, on the right side of the road, and as far to the right of the road as is practical and safe. Follow posted motor vehicle traffic laws.

Be Seen

Make yourself as visible to others as possible. Install bicycle reflectors on both the front and back of your bicycle. To enhance your visibility, wear neon and fluorescent colors and something reflective or flashing.



For Motorists

Watch for Bicyclists on the Road

Bicycles are less visible, quieter, and don't have a crumple zone around them. Bicyclists do have the same rights to the road as a motorist.

Slow Down

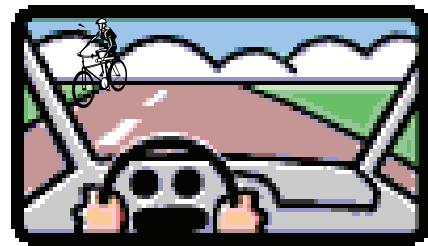
Always reduce your speed when passing bicyclists. Give at least three feet of passing space between the right side of your vehicle and a bicyclist, just like you would a slow-moving vehicle.

Be Aware of Road Conditions

Obstacles such as potholes, debris and drain grates can be hazardous to bicyclists: give them adequate space to maneuver. On narrow roads, bicycles ride in the "travel lane", which means they ride in or near the center of the lane.

Watch Out for Children

Expect the unexpected. Children on bicycles are often unpredictable.



For more information visit:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at www.nhtsa.dot.gov

Or

Safe Kids at www.usa.safekids.org