



October 2, 2012

## BICYCLES ARE VEHICLES...A Continuing Series Safety Equipment Do's & Don'ts

### **Helmets**

Nearly 75% of all bicycle-related deaths are the result of head injuries. The use of helmets would prevent many of these deaths. Some tests suggest that a hard-shell helmet lined with polyester is more effective than other types in preventing head injury.



Upon purchase, a knowledgeable professional should assist you with selection and proper fit. Make sure that the helmet meets the "Consumer Product Safety Commission 1999" helmet safety standard.



### **Wearing A Helmet**

A bicycle rider or passenger who is under 16 years of age must wear a bicycle helmet that is properly fitted and is fastened securely upon the passenger's head by a strap, and meets the federal safety standard for bicycle helmets. The term "passenger" includes a child who is riding in a trailer or semitrailer attached to a bicycle.

### **Gloves**

Gloves provide protection for hands in case of a fall & better grip for handlebars.



### **Headsets**

A bicyclist must not wear a headset, headphone, or other listening device (other than a hearing aid) when riding. Wearing a headset blocks out important audio cues needed to detect the presence of other traffic.

### **Lighting**

Please stay tuned for next week's "Bicycles are Vehicles" article with important information on bicyclist lighting requirements.

For Complete Bicycle Safety Information, visit  
<http://www.sheriff.org/safety/bike.cfm>.

Related Bicycle Safety Articles, visit  
[www.westonfl.org/Residents/BikeFriendly/BikeFriendlyHome.aspx](http://www.westonfl.org/Residents/BikeFriendly/BikeFriendlyHome.aspx).



## BIKES ARE VEHICLES Night Riding & Lighting

**Nearly 60% of all adult fatal bicycle accidents in Florida occur during twilight and night hours.**

**Many factors play a role on why riding at night is dangerous, such as:**

- Motorists driving under the influence of alcohol
- Motorists abilities to see what is ahead is limited to the area illuminated by headlights
- Visibility is further reduced by the glare from lights of oncoming cars
- Roadways with motor vehicles speeds above 40 mph pose extreme risk at night
- Red reflectors on the rear of the bicycle may be mistaken for reflectors on mail boxes

### **New Florida Statute 316.2065**

**As of January 1, 2013-** Every bicycle has to meet lighting equipment standards or is subject to warnings/fines issued by Law Enforcement. The act was approved by the Governor on April 27, 2012.

Every bicycle in use between sunset and sunrise shall be equipped with a lamp on the front exhibiting a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front and a lamp along with a reflector on the rear each exhibiting a red light visible from a distance of 600 feet to the rear. A bicycle or its rider may be equipped with lights or reflectors in addition to those required by this section.



A Law Enforcement Officer may issue a bicycle safety brochure and a verbal warning to a bicycle rider who violates this subsection or may issue a citation and assess a fine for pedestrian violation. The court shall dismiss the charge against a bicycle rider for a first violation of this subsection upon proof of purchase and installation of the proper lighting equipment.

No parent of any minor child and no guardian of any minor ward may authorize or knowingly permit any such minor child or ward to violate any of the provisions of this section.



**For Further information regarding Bicycle Laws & Safety, please visit**  
<http://sheriff.org/safety/bike.cfm>.

**For more "Bikes Are Vehicles" articles, please visit**  
[www.westonfl.org/Departments/Communications/NewsdayTuesdayReader.aspx](http://www.westonfl.org/Departments/Communications/NewsdayTuesdayReader.aspx).



## BIKES ARE VEHICLES

### Sidewalk Riding Vs. Roadway Position

Bicycle operation in traffic is a cooperative activity, governed by rules along with sidewalk riding. Since not everyone has enough experience with bicycle laws and procedures when riding both the bicyclist and drivers could be at risk for possible avoidable errors/injuries.

#### Sidewalk Riding

When riding on sidewalks or in crosswalks, a bicyclist has the same rights and duties as a pedestrian. A bicyclist must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and must give an audible signal before passing.

#### Roadway Position

A bicyclist that isn't travelling at the same speed as other traffic must ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb, edge of the roadway, or designated bike lane. A bicyclist may leave the right most portion of the road in the following situations: when passing, making a left turn, to avoid hazards, or when the lane is too narrow for a bicycle and a car to share it safely.



A bicyclist operating on a one-way street with two or more traffic lanes may ride as close to the left-hand edge of the roadway as is practicable.

Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway may not ride more than two abreast except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles.

Persons riding two abreast may not impede traffic when traveling at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under the conditions then existing and shall ride within a single lane.

#### Wrong-Way Riding

Another cause of bicycle/car crashes is bicyclists riding against traffic. By riding against traffic, bicyclists remove themselves from the normal scanning pattern of other vehicle operators, making them more likely to be struck. In addition, the reaction time of both the motorist and bicyclist approaching one another is cut dramatically. Riding on the right, as required by law, can help prevent this crash from happening.

For further information regarding **Bicycle Laws & Safety**, please visit <http://sheriff.org/safety/bike.cfm>.

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