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The Bicycle Issue!



It might feel as though it's been forever since the weather has been nice enough to ride a bike--but don't worry, you never forget how. Look inside for safety tips, Seattle's most dangerous intersections for bicyclists and much more!

Dates to Remember

July 2nd
Aliens land in Roswell, New Mexico in 1947

July 4th
Independence Day (US)

July 11th
World Population Day

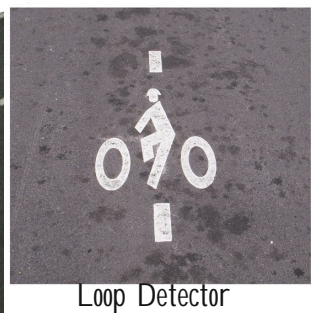
July 14th
Bastille Day (FR)

In this issue:

Know the Road
Bikes for Those in Need
Right of Way: How to Bike Safe in America
10 Bicycle Safety Tips
Washington State Bicycle Laws

KNOW YOUR ROAD

Unlike drivers, most cyclists haven't taken safety classes, and no one is licensing them to operate their vehicle. This means that it is on you, the bike operator, to take the initiative to go out and learn. One of the first things you should do is learn about the special symbols and lane markings that make riding a bike possible in standard traffic. We've collected some common ones below.



Loop Detector

A loop detector alerts that there is a bike waiting for a green signal. Position your front wheel on the sign to send the alert.



Buffered Bike Lane

A buffered bike lane has a separation between the motor vehicle lanes and the ones the bikes will be using, for added safety.



Bike Dot

A bike dot denotes where bike routes are, and should be in conjunction with signs.

A green lane alerts cyclists and drivers that the lane will be used by cars and bikes. Both riders and drivers need to be extra alert in these areas.



Green Lane

Ride Safe!

Check out the back page for trivia and a chance to win a free Starbucks giftcard!



July 11th is World Population Day.



The goal of World Population Day is to raise awareness about issues of overpopulation. One of those issues is obviously pollution, and riding your bike more and driving your car less can help our earth out. In some developing countries though, bicycles are more than just good for the environment--they are a necessity. Here are some charities that help get bicycles into the hands of those who need them.



Right of Way Riding and driving safely in America

Gas prices are going up all time while more and more American drivers are becoming aware of the effect that driving has on the world--environmentally and politically. But even as more people start pedaling, American municipal transportation agencies struggle to make their roads safe for cyclists. Many cities, including Seattle, have clearly marked bicycle lanes. In fact, Seattle recently began an initiative to create more infrastructure for bicycle commuters, including buffered bike lanes and biking and walking boulevards (seven miles of which are already being built in five Seattle neighborhoods.) The contention that has been stirred up around this program is indicative of the larger problem--cyclists and drivers do not get along. Cities in Europe are much more bicycle-friendly, not because they have more lane markings or options for cyclists (though that is sometimes the case) but because the attitudes between cyclists and drivers are vastly different. Drivers are used to sharing the road, and keeping an eye out for cyclists. Likewise, cyclists are more adept at following laws and safely navigating in traffic. This combined lack of understanding can create frustration on both sides. No matter how you feel about bicycles (or cars for that matter); we can all agree that commuters should be able to arrive at their destination in one piece. The best way that you have to keep yourself and others safe is to stay alert when you are on the road. By taking just a moment to make sure you aren't going to be pedaling or driving into the path of another vehicle, you could be saving a life.



There were 1300 accidents involving bicycles in Washington in 2009.

Most bicycle accidents result in injuries that are for more severe for the rider, and oftentimes those injuries can be life altering. If you were in an accident for which you were not at fault, you could very well be entitled to compensation. We hope you never have to, but if you do, don't hesitate to call one of our personal injury attorneys.



Top Ten Bike Safety Tips

- 1. Obey traffic laws and signals.** Bicycles are subject to the same rules as other vehicles.
- 2. Stay in your lane!** If your lane is right turn only, turn right. Don't ride against traffic.
- 3. Never pass on the right.** Standard vehicles might not be watching to the right.
- 4. Look behind you.** It's not impossible, it just takes practice to do without swerving. A rearview mirror is always an option.
- 5. Both hands on the brakes.** One hand might not be enough if you need to stop suddenly.
- 6. Wear a helmet.** (Duh.)
- 7. Signal, signal signal.** Letting drivers, pedestrians and other cyclists know what you are going to do is the biggest tool you have to keep yourself and others safe.
- 8. Make eye contact.** Never assume that a driver can see you--in fact, assume that they can't until you are sure that they have.
- 9. Hazards!** Debris, sewer grates and other hazards can be extremely dangerous if not avoided.
- 10. Use lights.** Not only is it the law to have a front white light and a rear reflector, it's just good sense when you are smaller and quicker than other vehicles.



Washington State Bike Laws

Just like any other vehicle, bicycles are subject to the rules of the road. In fact, **while out on the road bicycles are subject to the exact same laws as a car would be.** This even means that you can be ticketed if you are on a bike. Bicycles are able to travel on most roads, but there are some limited access highways that cannot be used by cyclists. **Cyclists are allowed to ride two abreast on the road, but no more.** One front light and one rear reflector are required for all bikes riding at night. **Finally, a cyclist can choose to ride on the shoulder or in a lane, whichever is safer.**



Don't forget to check out the back for our contest and the chance to win a Starbucks giftcard!

5 Ways to Know if Your Helmet Fits



1. While sitting flat on top of your head, does the helmet rock side to side? If so, it could be too big.
2. Your helmet should sit one or two finger-widths above your eyebrows.
3. The buckle should be centered under your chin, and adjust the slider to create a "v" shape under and slightly in front of your ears.
4. No more than one or two fingers should fit underneath the strap once it is buckled.
5. The helmet should not rock back and forth at all once it has been secured.



Fun in the Sun!

We want to see you and your family living it up in the sun this Summer! (If you can find it, that is.) Send us pictures of your favorite summer activity, and you might see it featured in next months Straight Talk! We'll choose one to win a \$25 giftcard, as well as a donation to the bicycle charity of your choice, as listed on page 2.

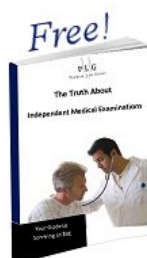
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