

## **Providing safe and secure communities**

*September 25, 2007*

### **Motorists and cyclists share responsibility on Alberta's roads**

*Edmonton...* Motorists must use caution and share the road with cyclists across the province. In the fall each day gets dark earlier and both motorists and cyclists need to exercise extra caution.

Motorists need to do the following.

- Recognize the hand signals that cyclists use and be prepared to slow down or stop. Check for bicycles in the side view mirror before opening vehicle doors when parking alongside the curb.
- Shoulder check before pulling away from the curb or when changing lanes. Check blind spots when turning left or right. Make eye contact as cyclists often use this as a means of communication.
- Drive defensively and do not follow too closely or crowd the cyclist. When passing a cyclist, leave a safe distance between the vehicle and the bicycle and pass at a moderate speed. Drivers of larger vehicles should be cautious of the wind they create when passing a cyclist, especially on dusty roads.
- Be courteous and avoid honking, unless absolutely necessary, because it could startle the cyclist and cause him or her to fall.

Cyclists need to do the following.

- Be predictable and let other road users know what you are going to do by using hand signals to warn drivers of all intended lane changes, turns and stops.
- Be visible. Wear bright or reflective clothing, especially at night or in poor weather. Avoid riding in vehicles' blind spots. Always stay as close to the curb or edge of the road as practical and if riding with other cyclists, ride in single-file never side-by-side.
- Ride defensively and look well ahead. Use caution when crossing intersections. Recognize and be careful of the blind spots around cars, trucks and buses. If possible, avoid busy streets. Don't wear headphones, as you may not be able to hear an approaching vehicle.
- Ride legally. In Alberta, if you are under 18, you must wear an approved bicycle helmet. For safety purposes, it is recommended that all cyclists wear a helmet. If you ride at night, your bicycle must be equipped with a front headlight, rear red light and a red rear reflector. Know the bylaws in your municipality with regards to riding on sidewalks.

Good drivers are considerate of other road users, including cyclists. Sharing the road is an essential rule that everyone needs to remember and abide by.

Improving traffic safety is one of the actions under Premier Ed Stelmach's plan to provide Albertans with safe and secure communities. Other priorities for the government are to govern with integrity and transparency, improve Albertans' quality of life, manage growth pressures, and build a stronger Alberta. For more information about traffic safety, visit [www.saferoads.com](http://www.saferoads.com).

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