



Aug. 27, 2014

14-124

For more information: Shelley M. Snow, ODOT Public Affairs, (503) 881-5362

“See and Be Seen” is mantra to *live by*

It’s back to school — and back to watching out for each other: bicyclists, drivers, motorcyclists and pedestrians alike

SALEM – With several recent bicycle-car crashes – and back-to-school just around the corner – ODOT and its partners are encouraging vigilance in sharing the road and watching out for one another. A transit campaign appearing soon on buses around the state says, “School is in. Keep an eye out.” Print and television public service announcements urge simple steps as a way of ensuring safety, such as making eye contact, avoiding distractions and wearing reflective gear.

“It’s really a matter of each person taking responsibility for his or her safety,” said Troy E. Costales, ODOT’s Transportation Safety Division administrator. “You may think a driver sees you – or as a driver, you may think you’re aware of all that is going on – but not *seeing* each other is often mentioned as one of the reasons for these crashes.”

Safety advocates remind all users of the transportation system that even a small mistake can have big consequences, and nothing is more important than getting to your destination safe and sound. A new online publication called “The Driver’s Field Guide to Sharing Oregon’s Roads” is available this week, and it will complement a publication that appeared earlier this summer, “The Bicyclist’s Survival [Guide](#).” Both are available on Transportation Safety’s [website](#) under “Bicycle Program.”

Here are some reminders that can help reduce crashes, injuries and even death:

For drivers

- With school back in session, there are more people walking and biking. Expect pedestrians, especially around bus and train stops, school zones and shopping centers.
- Stop for people in crosswalks.
- Bicyclists have the right to ride in the roadway; be on the lookout!

—more—

For drivers (continued)

- When passing a bicyclist, leave enough room to avoid contact if the rider falls into your lane. Return to your lane only when you're completely clear of the rider.
- Before turning right, use your mirror or take a quick look over your shoulder to check your right rear zone: if you see approaching bicyclists, you must yield.
- When you have a bike box on the road in front of you, you can't turn right on red.
- When driving through neighborhoods or school zones, be alert for younger bicyclists who may not be familiar with the rules of the road and/or may be less predictable.
- At night, watch for bicycle lights and reflectors.

For pedestrians

- Don't assume the coast is clear just because you have a walk sign. Look 'left-right-left' – and keep looking – as you cross the street.
- Ditch the distractions: don't talk on the phone or wear headphones – you may need your ears to survive.
- Make sure you are seen. Wear bright outer clothing. Make eye contact with drivers.
- Every intersection is considered a pedestrian crosswalk, whether it's marked or not – but that doesn't mean cars will yield! And if you are not crossing at an intersection, you are required to yield to vehicles.

For bicyclists

- Ride on the right, in the same direction as traffic; it will help you be seen (and it's the law).
- Use bike lanes when available. When on the street, you are required to follow the rules of the road, just like a vehicle.
- Gear up: always wear a helmet, have reflectors and lights on your bike, wear bright clothing during the day and reflective gear at night.
- Don't assume drivers see you; blind spots are big. When close to an intersection, don't pass on the right, just in case a driver is turning right but hasn't signaled.
- Be predictable: Signal all your actions.
- Listen and be alert; don't wear headphones.

##ODOT##