



# May is Bicycle Safety Month

It is that time of year again when the weather starts to get warm, and we see more and more bicyclists on Connecticut roadways. To bring attention to these vulnerable road users, the month of May is Bicycle Safety Month. To highlight why we need to bring awareness to bicycle safety, we can look to the most recent statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). NHTSA shows us that in 2023, there were 1166 bicyclists killed and an estimated 49,489 riders injured nationwide on our roadways. Our partners at the Connecticut Transportation Safety Research Center (CTSRC) reported that in our state in 2023, there were 5 fatal collisions with bicyclists and a reported 349 injuries. We need to do our part, whether we are walking, driving our vehicles, or riding our bicycles, to reduce these numbers.



NHTSA has come up with a few quick tips to help all road users increase bicycle safety and bring the collisions with bicycles that cause these injuries and fatalities to ZERO. Bicycles are considered vehicles, which means bicyclists are required to follow the same rules of the road as drivers, and drivers should treat them as they would other vehicles.

## Tips for Bicyclists:

- Just like seat belts help save lives in a motor vehicle crash, bicycle helmets save lives, too. When biking, always wear a correctly fitting helmet.
- Compared to vehicles, bicyclists are harder to see because of their smaller size. To make it easier for drivers to see you, have reflectors and lights on your bike, and wear retroreflective and bright clothing.
- Bicyclists ride in the same direction as traffic, and obey street signs, signals, and road markings, just like a vehicle. Never text, listen to music, or do anything that can distract you from keeping your eyes, ears, and concentration on the road and traffic.



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## Tips for Drivers:

- Traffic safety is a shared responsibility. When driving, look out for bicyclists, never drive distracted, and look left-right-left and behind when turning right on red. Yield to bicycles as you would other vehicles.
- If you see a bicyclist, maintain a safe distance. Bicyclists are most often killed by drivers who strike them with the front of their vehicles, often at high speeds. The higher the vehicle speed, the higher the likelihood a bicyclist will be seriously injured or killed.

Our partners at Watch for Me CT also work hard to raise awareness about bicycle safety here in Connecticut. As a bicyclist, along with riding in a safe manner and obeying all the traffic rules, follow these tips which will help keep you safe as you share the roadway with other road users:

- Wear bright clothing or reflective gear to increase your visibility.
- Reflectors aren't always enough. Use lights at dusk, dawn, nighttime, or in the rain for maximum visibility. Lights increase your visibility in the daytime, too!
- Alert others that you're approaching or passing by using a bell or calling out "passing on your left," and allow plenty of space.
- Signal all turns. Use proper hand signals in advance to tell others where you are going.
- Ride in a straight, predictable manner and don't weave, swerve, or stop suddenly.

If you'd like to learn more about bicycle safety, visit Watch for Me CT and NHTSA's websites.



## References:

1. [NHTSA Bicycle Safety](#)
2. [Watch for Me CT Bicyclists Safety Tips](#)
3. [Connecticut Crash Data Repository \(CTCDR\)](#)

For more information and assistance with local road safety in your community, contact Jason Hughes, Safety Technical Associate, at [jason.hughes@uconn.edu](mailto:jason.hughes@uconn.edu) or Shawn Barry, Safety Technical Associate, at [shawn.barry@uconn.edu](mailto:shawn.barry@uconn.edu).



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