



Bike to Work Week May 9 – 15, 2005

Tim's Tips for Safe Cycling

Constable Tim Whittle of the NRP, a regular cycling commuter, offers 31 tips to ensure a safe and enjoyable commute to work.

1. A bicycle is a vehicle. Operate it as you would operate your car on the road.
2. Be predictable. Ride straight and signal your intentions.
3. Sidewalks are designed for pedestrians. Collision statistics show they are not safe for cycling. Check the bylaws in your area.
4. Never ride on the wrong side of the road facing traffic. Motorists will not expect you there and may not see you, nor can you see signals and road signs properly.
5. A legal bicycle must be equipped with a bell or horn, at least one brake operating on the rear wheel and for night riding, lights and reflectors, red shown to the rear and white shown to the front.
6. Always lock your bike - even if you only leave it for a minute.
7. Learn how to repair a flat tire. Always carry a spare tube, patch kit and a pump.
8. Hydrate when riding. Make sure to have water with you.
9. Falls can happen at any time. Always wear an approved bike helmet to reduce the risk of death or serious brain injury in the event of a fall or crash.
10. Eat every two hours when riding - make sure to eat before a ride and eat during longer rides.
11. In cooler weather, wear layers of clothing. Wear wool or another wicking material such as "coolmax" as a base layer.
12. Learn to use the gears on your bike. Avoid grinding a big gear. A Can Bike course can teach these skills.
13. Wear bright or light coloured reflective clothing at night.
14. Keep your bike in good repair. Do a daily check before your commute to avoid breakdowns.
15. Shoulder check, shoulder check, shoulder check - always ensure your movement can be made safely.

16. Ride far enough out from the curb to maintain a straight line, clear of hazardous sewer grates, debris, potholes and parked car doors.
17. If the road is too narrow for a bicycle and a car to pass simultaneously, then ride in the middle of the lane.
18. Obey all signs and signals - they do apply to cyclists.
19. Ride in the right portion of the rightmost lane that goes in the direction in which you would like to go.
20. Carry goods or articles properly. Use a rack, carrier or messenger bag. Avoid hanging items from the handlebars.
21. Keep tires properly inflated - the bike will roll more efficiently and experience fewer flat tires.
22. If you are not sure of the rules as they pertain to cycling - get a copy of the "Cycling Skills" manual from the Ministry of Transport or your local police.
23. We pay for hockey lessons, swimming lessons and tennis lessons - consider cycling lessons - take a CAN-BIKE course developed by the Canadian Cycling Association..
24. Before letting children ride on the road, give them a road test. Follow them as they ride their bike to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to do so safely.
25. Cycle in single file on the road when traveling in groups.
26. Plan your route. Take a little time before your commute to determine the best route.
27. Reduce speed in rainy weather as most bicycles brake poorly in wet weather.
28. Ride in a straight line at least one metre away from parked cars to avoid opening car doors.
29. Always cross over railway tracks at a 90 degree angle to avoid falling.
30. Ride standing on the pedals when crossing over bumps, railway and streetcar tracks.
31. Register for a 'Like to Bike?' course during the month of April, 2005 to get ready for Bike to Work Week.

For more information about Bike to Work Week see www.rnbc.info
or telephone 905-688-8248 ext 7422