



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CONTACT: Chief Erik Upson
Benicia Police Department
707-746-4263
iwidjojo@ci.benicia.ca.us

**The Benicia Police Department Urges Drivers, Bicyclists and Motorcyclists to
'Share the Road'**

May is National Bicycle Safety Month

Benicia, Calif. — May is National Bicycle Safety Month and the Benicia Police Department encourages drivers and bicyclists to share the road safely not just for the month of May, but every month of the year.

“The road is used not only by cars, but also pedestrians, motorcyclists and bicyclists,” Benicia Police Department Chief Erik Upson said. “The road belongs to everyone and we all share responsibility in making sure we all get where we are going safely.”

In an effort to educate drivers, bicyclists and motorcyclists on using roadways safely, the Benicia Police Department will have extra officers on patrol at different times for the rest of this month looking for violations made by drivers and bicyclists that increase the risk of crashes. Such violations include failing to yield, speeding, improper turning, riding a bike on the wrong side of the road or not following stop signs or signals.

Bicycle riders must follow the same rules of the road as drivers, including stopping at stop signs, yielding to pedestrians and not riding distracted or under the influence of alcohol or drugs. California law requires drivers to allow at least three feet of space when passing a bicycle.

Drivers should also be alert for motorcyclists, as many motorcycle crashes are caused when drivers do not see them. Check your mirrors and blind spots, especially when merging, turning or changing lanes.

Riders should make themselves visible by wearing brightly colored, protective clothing and keeping lights on during the day. Riders should also change lanes only when there is enough room and always wear a Department of Transportation compliant helmet.

Although lane splitting is now legal, motorcyclists should be extra careful traveling between lanes, avoiding the practice next to large vehicles like big rigs, buses and motorhomes, and factoring in lane width, traffic flow, and roadway conditions.

The Police Department suggests following these additional tips to ensure the safety of everyone using roadways:

- Drivers should look behind them before making a turn at an intersection, especially if crossing into a designated bike lane.
- Drivers should use extra caution backing up or leaving a parking space.
- Bicyclists should make themselves visible and wear brightly colored clothing.
- Bicyclists are advised to use lights from dusk to dawn (front white light and rear red flashing light or reflectors).
- Bicyclists should always wear a helmet and use hand signals when turning or stopping.

- Bicyclists must travel in the same direction of traffic and have the same requirements as any slow moving vehicle.
- Both drivers and bicyclists should avoid distractions like using their cell phone.

Funding for bicycle and motorcycle safety enforcement is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

All motorcycle riders, regardless of skill level, are encouraged to enroll in the California Motorcyclist Safety Program. Information and training locations are available at <http://www.californiamotorcyclist.com/> or calling 1-877 RIDE-411 (1-877-743-3411).



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