

## **Safety Tips for Motorists, Pedestrian, Running & Biking from Fairfield's Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee**

As more of our fellow Fairfielders get out to enjoy the summer weather, your town's Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee would like to remind townspeople of the following safety tips for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists to ensure we operate as safely as possible. Below is a summarized list of more lengthy tips at the Committee's website [www.fairfieldct.org/bikeped](http://www.fairfieldct.org/bikeped) that also includes Fairfield's Complete Street's Policy, maps of our town's bicycle routes, pumps, bike repair stations, and more.

(Below is what could appear in the First Selectman's email)

### **Motorists**

- Expect pedestrians and cyclists on the road
- Reduce speed when encountering pedestrians and cyclists
- Look for cyclists when opening doors.
- Give cyclists *at least* 3 feet of space
- Connecticut is a yield State regarding pedestrians in crosswalks
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol or other substances that impair the operation of a motor vehicle

### **Pedestrians**

- ALWAYS face traffic, it's the law because it's safer
- Walk/run single file
- Make sure you're visible
- Keep your dogs on a short leash
- Don't cover your ears so you can't hear
- Cross the street safely, use a crosswalk whenever possible

### **Cyclists**

- Ride with the traffic flow
- Obey all traffic laws
- Ride single file if riding with others
- Yield to traffic when appropriate
- Don't cover your ears so you can't hear
- Be predictable
- Stay alert at all times
- Look before turning
- Watch for parked cars

## Proposing having this listed on our website

### Motorists

**Expect pedestrians and cyclists on the road** – with the exception of highways, roads are designed to be SHARED ... they are NOT designed to be for motorists ONLY. Drive knowing that pedestrians and cyclists have a right to be on the road just as much as motorists.

**Reduce speed when encountering pedestrians and cyclists** – be respectful to non-motorists who share the road with you

**Look for cyclists when opening doors** – look in your mirror and open doors slowly to avoid a cyclist who is not expecting you to open your door

**Give cyclists *at least 3 feet of space*** – this is the LAW for safety reason, and sometimes this may require motorists to cross the double line to give cyclists/pedestrians ample space

**Connecticut is a yield State regarding pedestrians in crosswalks** – this is the LAW, please watch for crosswalks and yield to pedestrians to use the crosswalk

**Never drive under the influence of alcohol or other substances that impair the operation of a motor vehicle** – this is the LAW, please obey ... it's designed for your safety and others.

### Pedestrians

**Face Traffic** - If there is no sidewalk where you're walking/running, walk/run on the side of the road where you'll be facing oncoming traffic. That way you'll be able to see cars headed toward you, and give you a chance to get out of the way if necessary.

**Walk/Run Single File** - This gives the vehicle traffic the widest berth possible, so they'll be able to avoid you more easily. This is even more important on curvy, narrow roads, where a car might only have a second or two to twitch the wheel to avoid hitting you. It might be more comfortable to walk/run side-by-side, but it isn't safe.

**Make Sure You're Visible** - If you're walking/running at night, you should wear a reflective vest. Drivers don't expect walkers/runners to be out after dark, so you need to make sure they can see you. Be extra careful around dawn or dusk, as drivers may have the rising or setting sun in their eyes.

**Keep Your Dogs on a Short Leash** - Keep your dog and the people around you safe by keeping your dog on a short leash, so they don't run out towards other walkers, runners or cyclists.

**Careful Covering your Ears** - Listening to an audiobook, music or being on the phone while you're out on a walk/run is understandable, but it can be unsafe. Make sure your volume is quiet enough that you can still maintain a safe level of awareness about your environment and be able to hear bikers and approaching cars.

**Cross the Street Safely** – follow the advice ... ALWAYS look both ways before you cross a street. Keep an eye out – drivers and cyclists who have a green light can still turn across the pedestrian crossing, so watch out. Wave or make eye contact with drivers who may be turning to make sure they see you. It's their job to watch out, but if there's a collision between you and a car, the car won't be the one to suffer any damage. Jaywalking/running can save you time, but it is also a ticketable traffic offense as well as a safety hazard.

## **Cyclists**

**Ride With the Traffic Flow.** Ride on the right in the same direction as other vehicles. Go with the flow – not against it.

**Obey All Traffic Laws.** A bicycle is a VEHICLE and you're a driver. When you ride, obey all traffic signs, signals, and lane markings.

**Ride Single File if Riding with Others** - This gives the vehicle traffic the widest berth possible, so they'll be able to avoid you more easily.

**Yield to Traffic When Appropriate.** Almost always, drivers on a smaller road must yield (wait) for traffic on a major or larger road. If there is no stop sign or traffic signal and you are coming from a smaller roadway (out of a driveway, from a sidewalk, a bike path, etc.), you must slow down and look to see if the way is clear before proceeding. This also means yielding to pedestrians who have already entered a crosswalk.

**Careful Covering your Ears** - Listening to an audiobook or music when you're out on a ride is understandable, but it can be unsafe. Make sure your volume is quiet enough that you can still maintain a safe level of awareness about your environment and be able to hear other bikers, walkers/runners and approaching cars.

**Be Predictable.** Ride in a straight line, not in and out of cars. Signal your moves to others.

**Stay Alert at All Times.** Use your eyes AND ears. Watch out for potholes, cracks, wet leaves, slippery painted street lines, storm grates, railroad tracks, or anything that could make you lose control of your bike. You need your ears to hear traffic and avoid dangerous situations.

**Look Before Turning.** When turning left or right, always look behind you for a break in traffic, then signal before making the turn. Watch for left- or right-turning traffic.

**Watch for Parked Cars.** Ride far enough out from the curb to avoid the unexpected from parked cars (like doors opening, or cars pulling out).