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Maine Transportation Safety Coalition

Working Together To Promote Safe Transportation In Maine

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MaineDOT Pedestrian Safety Recommendations

MaineDOT strives to make bicyclists and pedestrians an integrated element of our intermodal transportation system. Bicyclists and pedestrians are significant partners in MaineDOT's efforts, providing cost-effective solutions to our state's mobility, safety and environmental goals. Pedestrians and bicyclists should be afforded the ability to safely travel between traffic generators such as homes, places of work, stores, schools, parks, etc.

The goal of a transportation system is to provide safe and efficient mobility and access for all modes of travel, including pedestrian and bicycle travel. MaineDOT is committed to providing a safe and efficient transportation system for all users.

Walking is a great way to exercise, recreate, and a great way to get around. The physical and psychological benefits of walking are well documented. Walking helps control obesity, helps prevent heart disease, and contributes to your overall quality of life. When you walk, you have more interactions with friends, family and neighbors than you do while driving. Walking helps you leave a smaller footprint on the environment too. By choosing to walk, you are making a healthy decision for your body, your mind, and your environment. However, as a pedestrian,

you are a vulnerable user of the road system. As a user of the road system, you have responsibilities just like motorists.

It is imperative that we all know how to walk carefully so we get to where we are going safely. As a group, pedestrians comprise about 6 percent of all highway fatalities each year. On average, a pedestrian is killed in a traffic crash every 113

minutes and injured in a traffic crash every 8 minutes in the United States. On average, a pedestrian is hit by a motor vehicle in Maine once a day. In the past five years, there have been 1358 crashes and 51 fatalities involving pedestrians in Maine. In 2008, 4,378 pedestrians were killed in the United States in traffic crashes, according to the National



Highway and Traffic Safety Administration.

Information on Maine Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Statistics can be accessed at the following MaineDOT site:

<http://www.maine.gov/mdot/traffic/docs/crashrecords/ped-bike-crashes2012-2016.pdf>

General Safety Tips for all Pedestrians

Look and Listen

Accidents involving pedestrians occur

WEAR SAFETY BELTS

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A Note from the Maine Transportation Safety Coalition

Thank you for reading the MTSC newsletter. We strive to keep our readers informed on the latest transportation safety news items that cover a variety of important topics from both local and national perspectives. If you would like to be automatically notified when newsletters are published, drop us an e-mail.

Drive Safely - Stay Distraction-Free and Buckle-Up!

The MTSC Executive Board

MaineDOT Pedestrian Safety Recommendations *(continued from p.1)*

Chair's Corner

throughout the year because of pedestrian inattention and carelessness. Always be alert while walking and don't assume that motorists, bikers and other pedestrians can see you.

See and be seen - Dress brightly

Do not assume that motorists can see you.

Wear bright colors or reflective clothing if you are walking at dusk, dawn, or night.

Carry a flashlight if you are walking at night.

Stay out of a driver's blind spot at all times.

Make eye contact with motorists when crossing the street.

Do not let children play near traffic or cross the street by themselves. Children are small, and drivers may not see them if they run into the street.

Walk on the sidewalk - Walk against traffic if necessary

The sidewalk is the safest place for pedestrians to walk. You should always walk on the sidewalk if one is available. If you must walk on or near a road, remember to walk

against the flow of traffic. This allows you to see oncoming traffic and to react if necessary.

When crossing the street, use a crosswalk

Properly located and warranted marked crosswalks are the safest places for pedestrians to cross the road because they are more visible and motorists are more aware that a pedestrian may be crossing. Maine law requires motorists to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in marked crosswalks. Even though motorists must yield, it is important to wait, look both ways, make eye contact, and proceed only when you know it is safe. When at a crosswalk with a signal, wait for the WALK signal before crossing the street. It is very unsafe to jaywalk diagonally across any intersection. The safest crossing points will have:

Enough room for you to stand back from the roadway

Crosswalks that are clearly defined on the pavement

Crossing signals that indicate when you should cross

A crossing guard to stop traffic to allow you to cross

Allow plenty of time to cross streets



When crossing the street it is important to allow enough time to cross from one side to the other even when using a crosswalk. A signalized crosswalk usually allows plenty of time to cross the street, however be aware of how much time the signal allows you. A crossing guard gives you as much time as you need to cross the street. Follow these rules when crossing the street:

Cross at a cross walk whenever you can.

Stop, look left, look right, and look left again before crossing.

Cross with a crossing guard's help when they are available.

At traffic lights, wait for the white WALK sign before crossing.

Watch for turning traffic at intersections even when using a crosswalk.

Wait, watch, and wave. Be certain to wait until all cars have stopped in all lanes and drivers see you before you cross the road. Wave to cars as you cross to thank them.

Walk at a constant speed and in a predictable manner.

Walk defensively

Don't simply assume that motorists know that by law, pedestrians have the right-of-way. Many of them don't. Be on guard at all times as a pedestrian.

Don't be distracted

As a pedestrian, it is easy to be distracted by your environment, listening to music, talking on a cell phone. However it is important to remain alert and aware of your surroundings in order to remain safe. Pay attention to traffic and other hazards of the road.

Watch out for cars

Both pedestrians and motorists have responsibilities when using the roadways. Operating a motor vehicle is very difficult. It is easy to become distracted behind the wheel. Motorist distractions are a primary cause of pedestrian crashes. Therefore as a pedestrian, do not assume that motorists see you. Make yourself visible and don't assume the right of way.

Plan safe walking routes

Some walking routes are safer than others. Use the routes that have the least amount of traffic, the largest sidewalk, the least amount of street crossings and the best lighting.

Be alert to engine noise

Parked vehicles pose a major threat to pedestrians. Be aware of cars that have turned on their engines, they will be pulling out soon. Be alert

Over the last year, MaineDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have worked on the development of a Statewide Pedestrian Safety Campaign. An in-depth analysis was conducted on motor vehicle crashes involving pedestrians, including frequency and contributing factors. This analysis was used to develop target messages for the pedestrian safety campaign. The results of these efforts have the potential to save lives and reduce injuries, and to educate the traveling public on the importance of safe driver and pedestrian behaviors.

If you would like to develop your own pedestrian safety action plan in order to improve pedestrian conditions in your community, check out the Safety Action Plan (PDF) from the Federal Highway Administration.



Ten Things Every Commercial Driver Should Know

As we approach Maine's warm weather months, there are more commercial vehicle and bicycles on the roadway. The Bicycle Coalition of Maine appreciates that many companies already train their drivers on how to operate safely near bike riders, but offers this list of refresher tips for commercial drivers to keep everyone on the roadway as safe as possible. Please consider sharing it with your drivers and keeping training programs regarding safe operation near bicyclists current. Know that the Coalition is also taking steps to inform riders how to safely operate near commercial vehicles.

1. Bikes belong. Under Maine law, bicycle riders are included in the definition of "traffic" and generally have the same rights and the same responsibilities as vehicle operators. Expect to see bikes in travel lanes, on

paved shoulders, on sidewalks, in business entry and exit ways, in parking lots, in roundabouts and moving in and out of private ways. People are riding bikes throughout our state. They ride in rural and urban areas, during all four seasons, and throughout the day and night.

2. Bike riders can be fast. Many bicycle riders are fast—much faster than drivers think. Some bicyclists travel at speeds of 20-40 miles per hour, especially when they are going downhill or with a tailwind. Be careful not to cut fast-moving or other bicyclists off when turning or pulling over.



3. Passing bicycle riders. A bicyclist should not be passed unless it is safe to do so. Avoid attempting to "squeeze by" a bicyclist at a risk to the bicyclist and/or oncoming traffic. A bicyclist being passed by you should not have to leave the roadway to accommodate your pass. Be aware of

surface conditions on the roadway (e.g. potholes, sand, cracking, etc.) before beginning to overtake any bicyclist.

4. Three feet is often not enough space. Maine law requires motor vehicle operators to leave at least three feet between their vehicles and a bicycle being passed. However, three feet is often not enough operating space for a bicyclist, particularly when bicycles are being passed at high speeds by large vehicles. Think about the potential wind tunnel effect on a bicycle rider when passing, as well as the weather, surface conditions and other traffic on the way.

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5. Bikes passing on your right. In Maine, it is lawful for a

bicyclist to pass on the right. Expect that this may happen, particularly at intersections and/or when motor vehicle traffic is slowing.

Bicyclists may be passing on the right in locations where you may not think it is safe for them to do so. They may be doing so at their own risk, but you still don't want them to get killed or hurt. Use your mirrors and look for bicyclists in your blind spots before turning, moving to the right or pulling over onto the right side of the roadway.

6. Objects extending from your vehicle. Mirrors and other objects hanging off commercial vehicles can easily clip a cyclist's head, neck, arm and/or other body parts. Be aware of this when passing and or driving near bicyclists.

7. Vehicle maintenance and visibility. Maintain your vehicles (including your windshields, wipers and lights) so that you can see bikes and other vulnerable users in all weather and light conditions.

8. Distracted Driving. Bicycle riders are particularly susceptible to death or serious injury when commercial drivers in large vehicles drive distracted. Find a safe and lawful place (ideally off the public way) to engage in activities other than driving. Please turn off phones and devices so you are not distracted by their beeps, buzzing and other sounds.

9. Pulling Over / Parking. Avoid pulling over or parking in a bike lane or a shoulder where a bicyclist is riding, as that could be deadly or dangerous. This is particularly so

where sight lines are not good and/or where a bicyclist is forced into other traffic, off the road or to stop unexpectedly.

10. Horns. Horns should never be used to threaten or harass a bicyclist, even if the bicyclist has acted in a way that you think is rude or unlawful. Recognize that using your horn to alert him or her to your presence may startle a bicyclist.

By: Shannon Belt and Lauri Boxer-Macomber*

* About the Authors- Shannon Belt is the Bicycle Coalition of Maine's Education and Outreach Coordinator for the Greater Portland Area, a Licensed Class B Commercial Driver, and a League of American Bicyclists Cycling Instructor. Lauri Boxer-Macomber is a bicycle and pedestrian attorney at Kelly, Rimmel & Zimmerman who sits on the Board of Directors of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine and is the Maine member of the National Bike Law Network.

AAA Launches “Don’t Drive Intoxicated - Don’t Drive Intexticated”



As National Distracted Driving Awareness Month begins, AAA Northern New England is launching a new, multi-year initiative that aims to reduce deaths and injuries as a result of cell phone use by drivers.

“Don’t Drive Intoxicated – Don’t Drive Intexticated” is the theme of AAA’s multimedia traffic safety education campaign created to make distracted driving socially unacceptable.

New public service announcements (PSAs) are designed to help audiences understand that the consequences of using a smartphone while driving are the same as drinking and driving. The campaign targets drivers who would never consider drinking a beer behind the wheel, and yet, regularly engage with mobile devices that dangerously take their eyes, hands and minds off the road.

AAA Northern New England recognizes the impact that more than 50 years of public education efforts against alcohol-impaired driving have had across the country. Those campaigns helped to achieve changes to alcohol-impaired driving laws, increased enforcement, and, critically, a shift in public attitudes and behaviors toward drinking and

driving. Although much more still needs to be done, anti-drunk driving campaigns and related efforts have helped cut the number of alcohol-impaired crash fatalities in half since the 1980s, according to the National Institutes of Health.

“AAA has made traffic safety a priority since 1921, working to make roads, vehicles and drivers safer,” said Pat Moody, director of

public affairs for AAA Northern New England. “Through this latest initiative, AAA NNE is committed to changing attitudes and behaviors surrounding the deadly problem of distracted driving, and we will continue this effort for years to come.”

New research released by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety finds that even though 97 percent of drivers say

texting/emailing while driving is a serious or very serious threat to their safety, 45 percent admit to having read a text or email while driving in the past month, and 35 percent admit to having typed one. AAA’s sobering new message makes it clear that the consequences of both alcohol-impaired driving and texting while driving are the same – deaths and injuries.

Campaign messages will appear as public service announcements, on social media, at special events, in the AAA member magazine, and in AAA branches. The messages will also



YOU DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE, SO WHY DO YOU TEXT AND DRIVE?

Put down your phone. Lives depend on it.



For more information visit:
AAA.com/DontDriveDistracted

In the News



be incorporated into continuing AAA traffic safety programs offered in local communities.

Distracted driving kills an average of nine people and injures 1,000 each day, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. It is the third leading driver-related cause of crash fatalities behind speeding and driving under the influence.* And these numbers likely underestimate the problem because most drivers do not admit to distracting cell phone use after a crash. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety has conducted numerous studies regarding distracted driving that demonstrate:

- Drivers interacting with cell phones to perform tasks like texting or surfing the Internet are two to eight times more likely to be involved in a crash.
- Taking your eyes off the road for just two seconds doubles your chances of being involved in a crash.
- 59 percent of all teen crashes involve some form of driver inattention, and 12 percent of teen crashes involve cell phone use.

AAA encourages all motorists to eliminate distracted driving by following these tips:

- Put it away. Place your mobile device out of sight to prevent temptation.
- Know where you’re going. If using a navigation system, program the destination before driving.
- Pull over. If you have to call or text while on the road, pull off the road safely and stop first.

- Ask passengers for help. If riding with someone, seek their help to navigate, make a call or send a message.
- Be a good passenger. Speak out if the driver of your vehicle is distracted.
- Don’t be a distraction. Avoid calling or texting others when you know they are driving.
- Everyone should prevent being intexticated. Just as drivers need to pay attention, so do pedestrians and bicyclists. Never call, text or play games while walking or cycling.

Safety Tips for Bicycle Safety Month & Bike to School Day



May is Bicycle Safety month, and the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

(NHTSA) is reminding drivers and bicyclists to do their part to help reduce deaths and injuries on our roads.

"We encourage bicyclists and motorists to put safety first," said Deputy Administrator Heidi King. "Take simple precautions - remain focused to the road and the traffic around you; anticipate what others may do, before they do."

All States require bicyclists on the roadway to follow the same rules and responsibilities as motorists. There are two main types of crashes involving bicycles; the most common are falls and the most serious are with vehicles. In 2016, NHTSA data shows that 840 bicyclists were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in the United States, an increase from 829 in 2015, accounting for 2.2 percent of all motor vehicle traffic fatalities.

Tips for Bicyclists:

Always wear a properly-fitted helmet that meets the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standards.

Check your bike equipment before heading out: check for proper fit and function, including tires, brakes, handlebars and seats.

Ride in the same direction as traffic, as a vehicle on the road.

Obey traffic signs, signals, and lane markings; signal all turns; and follow local laws.

Be predictable; ride in a straight line and use hand signals when changing lanes or turning.

Stay focused; look ahead for traffic and obstacles in your path.

Be visible: wear bright colors, reflective materials and lights on your bicycle at night and in low light conditions.

Stay alert: don't use electronic devices.

Ride safe; riding impaired by alcohol or drugs affects your judgment and skill; it affects your safety and others on the road

Tips for Motorists:

Pass bicyclists on the road with care; allow at least three feet clearance.

Look for cyclists before opening a car door or pulling out from a parking space.

Yield to bicyclists at intersections and as directed by signs and signals.

Look for bicyclists before making turns, either left or right.

Respect designated bicycle lanes; don't use them for parking, passing or turning.

Never drive distracted or impaired. Always buckle up.

Additional information about bicycle safety is available here.

Stay connected with NHTSA: Search for open recalls with NHTSA.gov/Recalls | Download the Safercar Mobile App for Apple devices | Receive recall alerts by e-mail | Visit us on Facebook.com/NHTSA | Follow us on Twitter.com/NHTSA.gov | Watch 5-Star Safety Ratings crash tests on YouTube.com/USDOTNHTSA.

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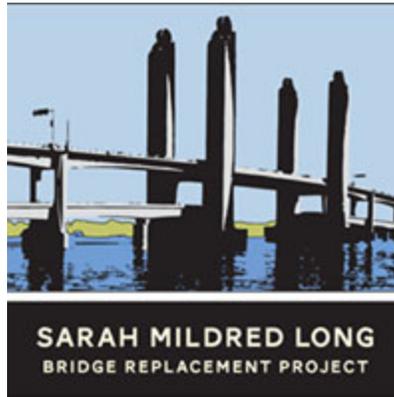
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Sarah Mildred Long Bridge Walk Celebration to be Held in June

Kittery - The Maine Department of Transportation and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation will be hosting a Bridge Walk Celebration on Friday, June 8th from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

The Sarah Mildred Long Bridge will be closed to traffic and the community is invited to enjoy a morning on the bridge, meet dignitaries, take souvenir photos and learn about the project's importance. The celebration will include representatives from both the Maine and New Hampshire DOTs, as well as state and national dignitaries.

A group made up of representatives from the Kittery and Portsmouth communities, the local Chambers of Commerce as well as the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and the Port of Portsmouth are helping to plan the celebration. More details will be provided on the MaineDOT website and the dedicated Sarah Mildred Long Facebook page as the plans unfold.



The Sarah Mildred Long Bridge spans the Piscataqua River between Kittery, Maine and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The design process for the new bridge began in 2013 with construction starting in winter 2015. The bridge opened to traffic on March 30th of this year.

“We look forward to the surrounding communities experiencing the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge with this special event,” said MaineDOT Chief Engineer Joyce Taylor. “This is a great opportunity for local residents to experience this bridge which will be utilized for generations to come.”

As plans unfold, details will be posted at: www.mainedot.gov, www.facebook.com/SarahMildredLongBridge or www.twitter.com/SMLongBridge

Ted Talbot, Press Secretary 207-885-7046

MTSC: Promoting Safe Transportation in Maine

**Mark Your Calendars and Save the Date(s)
 For the Maine Transportation Safety Coalition Meeting**

BPS/BHS in the Champlain Room from 9:30-Noon

Check the Maine Transportation Safety Coalition at www.themtsc.org for upcoming meetings and events.