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## Practice Safe Habits When Riding a Bicycle



As the weather gets warmer, you may begin enjoying more outdoor activities, such as riding a bicycle. Riding a bike is a great way to get exercise and have some fun, too! When riding a bicycle, it's important to stay safe, since injuries can occur.

In 2015, about 467,000 injuries related to bicycle riding occurred, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Livingston Health Department reminds residents to ride safely by following these tips:

**Wear a helmet.** Everyone should wear a properly fitted bike helmet when riding a bicycle. The chin strap should be tight enough that only two fingers can fit under the strap. Check that your helmet meets the standards of the Consumer Product Safety Committee, the American Society of Testing and Materials, or the Snell Memorial Foundation. In New Jersey, anyone under the age of 17 *must* wear a helmet when riding a bicycle. Wearing a helmet can help protect your head from a serious injury if you are involved in a bicycle accident.

**Make sure your bike is in good working order.** Check that your tires are inflated, the brakes work, there is no problem with the chain, and the bike is adjusted properly for you. Don't ride a bike that is not meant for someone your size.

**Make yourself visible.** Wear bright colors to make yourself more visible to others – especially to drivers. Your bike should also have a horn or bell to alert drivers and pedestrians who might not see you.

**Attach lights/reflectors to your bicycle.** Your bike should have lights and/or reflectors on it to make you more visible, especially when it is dark. If you are riding at night, you should have a front white light and a rear red light on your bike.

**Ride safely on streets.** Always ride your bike with traffic and not against it. Be sure to obey any traffic signs and signals.

**Stay alert.** Stay focused when riding a bike. Don't send text messages or listen to music that could distract you.

**Use caution when turning.** When making a turn, watch for cars. Use hand signals to let drivers know that you are turning and in which direction.

**Look out for road hazards.** Watch for and avoid riding your bike on rocks, sticks, puddles, potholes, and other debris.

**Ride on a bike path.** If you don't feel comfortable riding your bike on roads as part of regular traffic, choose roads with a bike lane or – better yet – ride your bike at a park that has bike paths.