



# BROOME COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD NEWSLETTER

Broome County Health Department 225 Front St. / Binghamton, NY 13905

Christine Muss, Traffic Safety Coordinator

Telephone: 607-778-2807 / Fax: 778-3998 / Email: [CMuss@co.broome.ny.us](mailto:CMuss@co.broome.ny.us)

## What's Your PSI?

April/May 2007

If you are wondering what **PSI** is, it stands for **P**ounds per **S**quare **I**nch. Why should you care? Well, because it is the measure that we use when determining proper tire pressure. **April 23-29<sup>th</sup>** marks **National Tire Safety Week** and we are challenging **you** to learn about tire safety! Knowing how to maintain proper tire pressure can help you avoid tire failure and crashes. According to [Safercar.gov](http://Safercar.gov), motorists who "know their PSI" and maintain it can help to optimize fuel economy and tire life, saving dollars and protecting our environment in the process. Under-inflated tires and overloaded vehicles are the leading causes of tire failure. So here are some key tips for keeping your tires safe on the roads:

- **Check your tire pressure at least once a month.**
  - **You cannot tell correct tire pressure just by looking.** Use an accurate tire pressure gauge to measure pressure when tires are "cold" — meaning they haven't been driven on for at least three hours.
- **Check the overall condition of your tires, particularly the tread and sidewalls, at least once a month.**
  - **Use the Lincoln's head penny test-** Place a penny in the tread with Lincoln's head upside down and facing you. If you can see the top of Lincoln's head, you are ready for new tires.
  - Or look for the built-in wear bar indicators to determine when it's time to replace your tires. In general, tires are not safe and should be replaced when the tread is worn down to 1/16 of an inch.
  - Make note of any irregular tread wear. This could be an indication of a wheel misalignment, the need for a tire rotation, or both. Uneven tread wear is a sign that you need to take your car in for servicing.



Tire at 32 psi  
(100% recommended pressure)

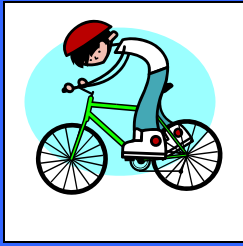


Tire at 16 psi  
(50% recommended pressure)

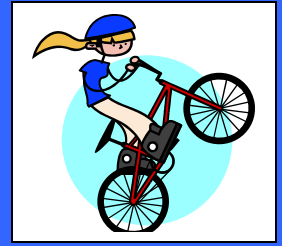
**The correct PSI or pressure for your tires is listed on your vehicle's tire information label or in your owner's manual, not what's on the side of the tire.**

TIRE INFORMATION		VEHICLE CAPACITY WEIGHT 850lbs	
SEATING CAPACITY		TOTAL 5 : FRONT 2 : REAR 3	
RECOMMENDED TIRE SIZE	COLD TIRE INFLATION PRESSURE	SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
P185/70R14 87S	FRONT 210kPa, 30psi REAR 210kPa, 30psi		
COMPACT SPARE TIRE	UP TO VEHICLE CAPACITY		
T115/70D14 88M	420kPa, 60psi		

For more information, visit [www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov)



# Bike Month May 2007



## Be Predictable

- Ride WITH traffic.
- Ride as close as you can to the right side of the road.
- Use a bike lane whenever possible.
- Obey all traffic signs & signals.
  - Bicyclists, drivers & pedestrians all follow the same traffic laws.
  - Drivers should treat bicycles as another vehicle.
- Don't cling to other vehicles.



## Be Seen

- Do not assume a motorist sees you:
  - Establish eye contact.
  - Act in a manner as if they did not see you.
- Make your presence known!
  - Be loud! Use a horn, a bell or your voice!
- When riding at night:
  - Use headlights, taillights, front & rear reflectors & pedal reflectors.
  - Wear **light colored** clothing & add reflective materials to increase your visibility.



## Be Careful

- Avoid road construction, congested two-way streets & complicated intersections.
- Keep tires, brakes and safety equipment maintained.
- Know your limitations & your bicycle's limitations.
- Look behind you & all around.



## Don't Forget Your Signals!!!



Left Turn



Stop



Right Turn



Right Turn

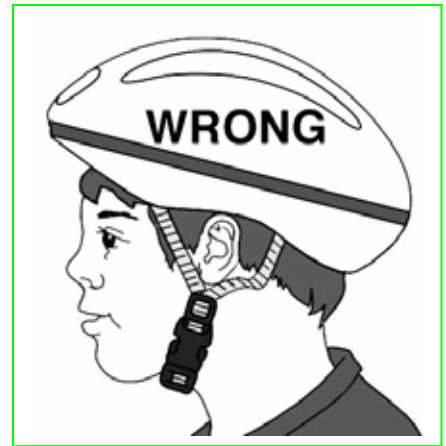
## Some Traffic Laws You Should Know:

1. Bicyclists have the legal right to share the road on most public highways but it is prohibited on interstate highways & expressways.
2. Most localities prohibit riding on sidewalks.
3. Never drive a bike with a motor attached on any public highway.
4. Never attach yourself or your bike to another vehicle.
5. Keep at least one hand on the handlebars at all times.
6. Keep feet on pedals & never carry more people on the bike than the number for which it was designed.
7. Sit on the bike seat, not on the fender or handlebars.
8. Children under the age of 1 are prohibited from being transported on a bike.

# Fitting Your Helmet

## Eyes:

Helmet should sit level on the head & rest low on the forehead, 1 to 2 finger widths above the eyebrow. You should be able to see the very edge of your helmet looking up past your eyebrow. A helmet pushed up too high will not protect the face or head well in a fall or crash.



## Ears:

The straps are even and form a "Y" under the earlobe (where the earlobe meets the head) & are snug against the head.



## Mouth:

The buckled chin strap is loose enough so that you can breathe. There should be enough room so you can insert a finger between the buckle and chin, but tight enough that if you open your mouth, you can feel the helmet pull down.

## Checking the Fit

- ✓ With one hand, lift the front of the helmet up & back. It shouldn't move.
  - If the helmet moves & reveals the forehead, tighten the ear straps.
- ✓ The helmet should move no more than 1 inch from side to side.
  - If it does, try adding thicker pads.
- ✓ The helmet should feel comfortable.
  - If it doesn't, keep working with the pads & straps, OR try another helmet.

## Choosing a Helmet

- Helmet should meet safety standards.
  - Look for the Consumer Product Safety Committee (CPSC) sticker inside helmet
- Remember costly helmets are not always better.
- Be wary of used or hand-me-down helmets.
  - You don't know the crash history
- Let your child pick out their helmet.
  - They are more likely to wear it if they like it
- Start the helmet habit early.

**Helmets are only good for one crash, after that you must replace it!**



**Remember wearing a helmet can prevent about 85% of head injuries from bike crashes- but only if it fits correctly! Make sure you follow the 3 easy check points when fitting a helmet and make sure you wear it every time you ride!**

**According to NYS Law, anyone between the ages of 1-14 must wear an approved helmet.**

*Research and information provided by the Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center*





# Motorcycle Awareness Month May 2007

## Motorcyclists:

- Attend a motorcycle rider-training course to learn how to safely operate the bike.
- Be visible to other motorists at all times.
- Do not ride in a car's blind spot.
- Anticipate what may happen more than other vehicle drivers may.
- Be cautious when riding on slippery surfaces or in bad weather.
- Always wear a helmet, eye protection & clothing to reduce severity of injury in a crash.
- Obtain a motorcycle operator license.
- Avoid tailgating.
- Avoid riding between lanes or slow moving or stopped traffic.
- Know & obey traffic laws.
- Use signals where appropriate.
- Avoid excessive noise by leaving the stock muffler in place.

May 2007 celebrates Motorcycle Awareness Month! During this month we'd like not only all motorcyclists but motorists as well to take the time to become educated about motorcycle safety and sharing the roadways. There are over 4 million motorcycles registered in the United States. According to 2006 NYS DMV data, there are 4,553 motorcycles registered in Broome County. In 2005, 2,239 motor vehicle crashes occurred on our county roads, 57 of these involved motorcycles ([www.safeny.com](http://www.safeny.com)). The use of motorcycles are becoming more and more popular these days so drivers of both cars and bikes need to be aware of each other to prevent further crashes resulting in injury and death. About 5% of all highway fatalities involve a motorcycle. Motorcyclists are more likely to be killed in crashes because of the lack of protection for the driver. Automobiles are heavier, provide protection in a rollover, offer cushiony support of airbags and have safety belts to hold occupants in place during crash impact. Motorcyclists suffer in comparison to cars. So let's keep everyone safe by following these few simple safety tips on the roads:

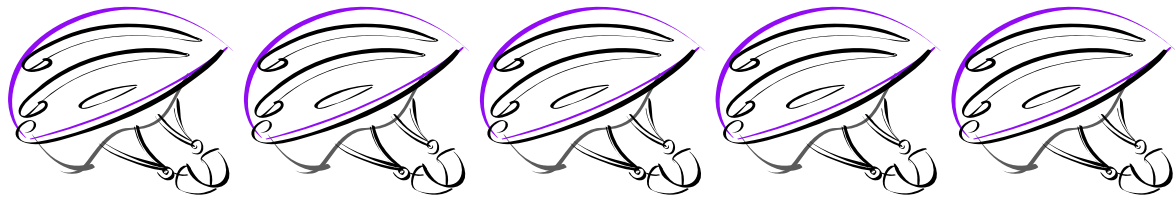
## Causes of Motorcycle Crashes:

- Lack of basic riding skills
- Failure to appreciate the inherent operating characteristics
- Failure to appreciate the limitations of a motorcycle
- Failure to use special precautions when riding
- Failure to use defensive driving techniques
- Lack of specific braking and cornering skills
- Failure to follow speed limit

## Drivers:

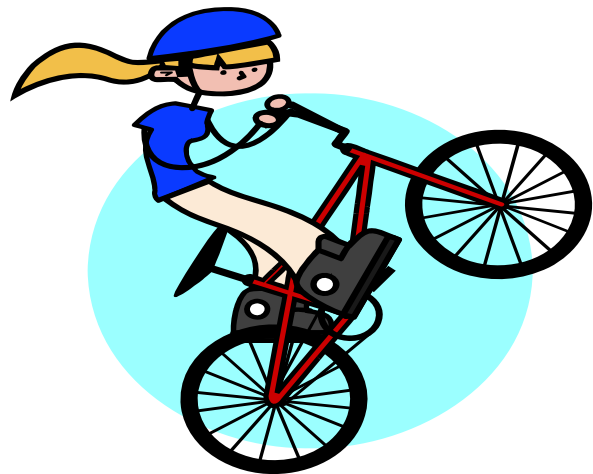
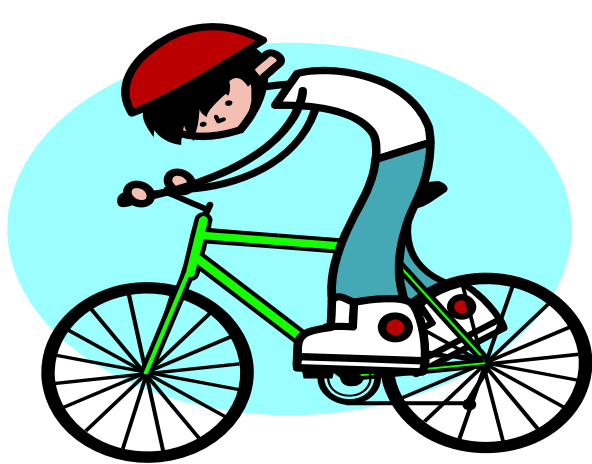
- ✓ Motorcyclists are part of our driving population. Drivers must make scanning for bikers second nature.
- ✓ Keep motorcyclists visible.
- ✓ Pay attention to the motorcyclist's distance from your vehicle.
- ✓ Avoid crowding when passing a motorcycle. Be sure to pass motorcyclists completely before returning to the right lane.

# Put a Lid on a Kid!!



*Did you know that wearing a bike helmet can prevent 85% of head injuries from bike crashes?*

## Helmet Drive!!



- The **Broome County Traffic Safety Program** will be assisting **Woodrow Wilson Elementary** in conducting a **bike helmet drive** during the months of **April & May**.
- All bike helmets will be given to the students of Woodrow Wilson Elementary in honor of **May Bike Month**.

For more information,  
please contact:

\* New bike helmets may be dropped off at  
the Broome County Health Department.\*

Christine Muss  
Traffic Safety Coordinator  
Broome County Health Dept.  
225 Front Street, Bing, NY 13905  
607-778-2807  
[CMuss@co.broome.ny.us](mailto:CMuss@co.broome.ny.us)

## Crying in the Car Seat

Some babies will fall asleep immediately before you've even started the car, others will fuss and cry the second you place them in their car seat. Parents may try to calm their baby down while driving or will sometimes take their crying baby out of the car seat. This is not only dangerous but will make it even more difficult to get the baby used to the seat. According to New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, approximately 21.6% of crashes that occur in Broome County are attributed to driver inattention/distraction. Either pull over and attend to your child or focus on your driving. Never try to do both!

Since we all want our kids to be safe and happy, KidsGrowth.com offers these easy tips to car seat happiness:

- **Make sure your baby is healthy.**
  - Your child may be crying because of an ear infection or some other illness.
- **Bring the car seat in the house and let your baby sit and play in it.**
  - Once your baby becomes familiar with it, they may not mind sitting in it in the car.
- **Keep a special box of car toys that you'll use only in the car.**
  - If these are interesting enough, they may hold your baby's attention.
- **Hang a made-for-baby poster on the back of the seat that faces your baby.**
  - A change of scenery is very helpful.
- **Experiment with different types of music in the car.**
  - Some babies enjoy lullabies or music tapes made especially for babies and will calm down as soon as they hear it.
- **Try "white noise" in the car.**
- **Practice with short, pleasant trips when your baby is in a good mood and someone can sit near them and keep them entertained.**
- **Put up a sunshade in the window if you suspect that sunshine in your baby's face may be a problem.**
- **Try to consolidate trips so that you aren't in the car for long periods and so that you don't have many ins and outs.**
- **Make sure your baby hasn't outgrown their car seat or that their belts have not become too tight or uncomfortable.**
- **Try opening a window for some fresh, moving air.**



**Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive**

*Graphics and research provided by the NYS Governor's Traffic Safety Committee [www.safeny.com](http://www.safeny.com), [www.safecar.gov](http://www.safecar.gov), the Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center and [www.kidgrowth.com](http://www.kidgrowth.com). The production of this newsletter was made possible through funding from the NYSGTSC.*