

**Ventura Police Department Urges Drivers and Bicyclists to ‘Share the Road’**

*May is National Bicycle Safety Month*

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

“It is not just cars using the road, but also people on bikes, motorcycles, or walking,” Ventura Police Department Sergeant Michael Brown said. “The road belongs to everyone and we all share responsibility in making sure we all get where we are going safely.”

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.

“With warmer weather, there will be more people out on bikes, so it is important that drivers anticipate more bike riders and exercise caution around them,” Corporal Al Gomez said. “The same goes for bike riders. Be safe, know the law and follow it.”

In an effort to educate drivers and bicyclists on using roadways safely, the Ventura Police Department will have extra officers on patrol 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.

A Bike Safety Rodeo will also be offered by the police department at “Chilin with VPD” on June 1 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Pacific View Mall parking lot in front of Sears on Main Street. The free community event will feature a marked bike course for children to practice safe bike riding, bike safety information, free bike registration, police vehicles, free ice cream and activities for children.

The Ventura Police Department suggests following these 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 go with the flow of traffic and let faster traffic pass.
- 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.
- Both drivers and bicyclists should avoid distractions like using their cell phone.

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