

## **RULES FOR SAFE AND COURTEOUS ROAD CYCLING**

Safe road cycling either individually or in a group requires that every cyclist understand that he or she must do more than “stay within his legal rights” to share the roads peacefully with motorists. It is not sufficient to follow only what the law allows cyclists to do. The reality is that a cyclist is always extremely vulnerable to motorized traffic and variable road conditions, which requires that the cyclist operate defensively at all times. The Barrington Bicycle Club (BBC) recommends adhering to the following guidelines for safe cycling on Barrington Area roads.

### **BEFORE YOU GET ON YOUR BIKE**

- **Know and understand all applicable bicycle operating laws and regulations of the communities in which you plan to ride. Specifically, please be aware that different communities in the Barrington Area have variations from each other and from Illinois State traffic laws and regulations. For example, the Village of Barrington Hills has passed an ordinance requiring that, on Village roads, cyclists are required to ride in single file. The BBC expects that its members will make every effort to respect each community’s laws and regulations**
- **Perform a pre-ride check of your bike to make sure that it is operating properly and safely, including the operation of the brakes, shifting of the gears and proper tire inflation. Bring whatever you may require to fix a flat on the road**
- **Always wear a helmet**
- **Bring enough water to keep fully hydrated, considering the temperature, duration and difficulty of the ride**
- **Wear visible, bright colored clothing**
- **Make certain that somebody in your group has a cell phone to be able to call for assistance in case of accident or breakdown**
- **Carry some basic form of identification in case of accident, which includes existing medical condition and allergy information for medical treatment**

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## **ON THE ROAD – GENERALLY**

- Obey all traffic control devices
- On an organized “group ride” the ride leader’s instructions regarding the conduct of the ride shall be respected
- Ride in the same direction as traffic, and ride in a predictable manner from the viewpoint of other cyclists and motorists following behind. Refrain from unnecessary swerving and any sudden maneuvers
- Do not pass other riders on their right under normal riding conditions
- Stop behind motor vehicles stopped at intersections, rather than creeping up on their right where they cannot see you
- Give hand signals to indicate changes in speed and turns, as well as to indicate road hazards
- Keep to the right lane, except in preparation to make a left turn, and position yourself in the lane so as to avoid blocking traffic that will attempt to pass you. Ride as far to the right as possible while still allowing for your safe operation of your bike. When riding in groups, be sure to remain conscious of traffic, limiting groups to riding no more than two abreast at all times and abiding by local regulations where applicable. In most instances, single file riding shall be standard conduct
- Avoid the edge of any pavement that may be in poor condition, without a shoulder and might be a collection area for road debris
- Maintain an appropriate, safe interval between yourself and other riders, motor vehicles and any potential hazards and road conditions. If you are aware that somebody is attempting to pass you from behind, please permit them to do so in any manner that does not endanger your personal safety
- Make yourself visible to motorists at all times. Avoid stopping or bunching up with other riders on curves, on hills or other locations where the motorist may not be able to see you *and* oncoming traffic clearly
- Acknowledge courtesy from motorists when they yield to you even if they are already required by law to do so. Avoid verbal and physical confrontations with motorists. The cyclist and cycling as an activity will always lose in some fashion as a result of such a confrontation
- If you have difficulty with a motorist, record all the information that you can, and report it to the local police. Follow up and pursue the matter with the police. Assert your rights under the law appropriately
- Do not spread debris on the route. Food wrappers, water bottles and any

other refuse should be maintained on your person until it can be deposited in an appropriate waste receptacle

### **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATING TO HORSE AND HORSE TRAILER ENCOUNTERS**

The Barrington Area Conservation Trust – working cooperatively with the Barrington Hills Riding Club and the BBC- is deeply concerned that there is a good understanding of the special considerations involved when cyclists encounter horses with riders and the additional dangers imposed by road encounters with horse trailers because of their unique design on often-narrow roads. Accordingly, drawing from their experience, they have passed along the following sensible additional guidelines to be considered in dealing with horse related encounters on the road:

- **When encountering equestrians on horseback...**
  - *Always announce yourself long before you encounter a horse — at least ten bike lengths before you reach them to give proper notice.*
  - *When approaching from behind, a pleasant “on your left” is appropriate, as is “biker behind you.” This allows the horse to identify your presence before they hear the whir of the wheels or see you coming up very quickly, which can cause a startle or a kick.*
  - *When approaching from the front, remember that a younger horse may not have experience with bikers so they may not recognize you as a bicyclist, but may view you as a mountain lion absent hearing your voice.*
  - *Don’t crowd the dividing line. Stay to the edge of your lane so that the horse does not interpret your movement as threatening, and so that the truck/trailer has adequate space. If you have a conversation with the rider, the horse can identify you as a person and not a mountain lion — it is amazing how much this helps.*
  - *Do not pass by riders in close proximity. Horses can move sideways extremely quickly, and if startled they could easily move into you, causing serious injury. Move across the dividing line before you approach the riders if there is no oncoming traffic. A horse often views anything coming from behind as a predator and can react badly to it.*
- **When encountering horse trailers/trucks...**
  - *Do not ride between the truck/trailer and the edge of the road. It’s possible that you won’t be noticed by the driver and that you’ll be forced off the road.*

**•Do not ride so fast that you remain in the lane where the truck/trailer return after they pass you. The truck/trailer must cross back over the center line, and you will place yourself in harm's way.**

**•Avoid blowing by the truck/trailer at a stop sign. Bicyclists may be tempted to pass a truck/trailer, usually on the left but sometimes on the right, at a stop sign. The rig stops at the sign, but the bikers don't. However, the truck/trailer can't easily see you and runs the risk of hitting you when it starts moving again because you are not supposed to be there.**

**•If a trailer approaches you from behind, the truck/trailer will pass you if room permits. They cannot safely remain over the dividing line for very long, so they will move back into the traffic lane as quickly as possible. If you ride too close to the trailer, you run the risk of getting hit by the trailer as the truck/trailer crosses back over. You may not be seen depending on where you are in relation to the trailer, and the impact of the trailer hitting your bike won't be felt by the truck at all. They will have no idea that your bike was hit.**

**•Be aware of traffic back-ups. Many roads in Barrington Hills are very narrow, so the truck/trailer can't safely pass you until they get to a suitable spot. Be aware that this can cause traffic back-ups behind you and anxious drivers. There will be great motivation to cross back over very quickly – be prepared to slow down to give the truck/trailer right of way or you risk being hit.**