

May 2024

A Safer Naperville --- Share the Road

With spring in full swing and school wrapping up soon, it's only a matter of time until our sidewalks and roadways are teeming with people out biking, playing and exercising. Whether you're out enjoying the sunshine in a vehicle, on a bicycle, or on foot, it's important to remember that EVERYONE has a responsibility to share the road. Here are some reminders and tips to keep drivers, cyclists, and walkers/runners safe.

Tips for Drivers

Drivers are reminded to turn on vehicle headlights at dusk and be vigilant in looking out for cyclists and pedestrians. Additionally, drivers should:

- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- Slow down and obey the posted speed limit.
- Yield to pedestrians and cyclists when turning.
- Look before opening your door.
- Be careful when passing stopped vehicles.
- Allow three feet when passing bicyclists.
- Avoid distractions and watch out for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Do not block crosswalks when you stop at intersections.
- Take extra care while driving around schools, playgrounds and neighborhoods.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs when driving; they impair your abilities and your judgment.

Tips for Cyclists

When traveling on city streets, cyclists are required to follow the same rules of the road as motorized vehicles. This means stopping at stop signs, obeying traffic signals and lane markings, and using hand signals to let others know your intention to stop or turn. Additionally, cyclists should follow these tips:

- Don't wear headphones; you need to be able to hear if a car is approaching.
- Slow down and check for oncoming traffic before entering any street or intersection.
- Do your best to anticipate hazards and adjust your position in traffic accordingly.
- Be predictable: ride with the flow of traffic, on the right, and in a straight line – not in and out of parked cars on the side of the street.
- Be visible and wear the proper protective gear.
- Make eye contact with motorists to let them know you are there (but don't always expect them to see you).
- Stay visible by riding where drivers are looking (i.e., do not pass on the right).
- Avoid riding at night. If you must ride in the dark, the law requires that your bike have a front light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet and a rear red reflector visible for up to 600 feet.
- Wear white/light colors and/or reflective clothing when riding at night.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs when cycling; they impair your abilities and your judgment.

Bicycles may be ridden on the sidewalks in Naperville unless otherwise posted. However, bicycle riding is not permitted on sidewalks on the Riverwalk or in Downtown Naperville.

Please note that there are state and local rules and regulations for operating electrical assist bikes (e-bikes). Individual park and forest preserve districts can also set rules about the use of e-bikes on their property. Make sure you check with the jurisdiction you'll be riding in for rules specific to your class of e-bikes.

Tips for Walkers and Runners

Whether you're going for an afternoon stroll, commuting to work on foot, or getting some exercise, it's important to pay attention. Pedestrians should keep the following tips in mind:

- Use signaled crosswalks when possible and use extreme caution when crossing at intersections without signals. Look for cars in all directions, including those turning left or right. If a crosswalk or intersection is not available, locate a well-lit area where you have the best view of traffic. Wait for a gap in traffic that allows enough time to cross safely; continue watching for traffic as you cross.
- Look both ways before crossing the street.
- Never run between cars into the street.
- Follow the rules of the road and obey signs and signals.
- Walk on sidewalks whenever they are available. If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic and as far to the side of the road as possible.
- Wear clothing that allows drivers and people to see you. That means no dark clothes after dark or early in the morning.
- Exercising outdoors at dusk or at night can be dangerous without some type of reflective device on your clothing. Many athletic shoes have reflective qualities built in, but also consider a vest complete with reflective tape.
- Keep alert! Practice situational awareness and be aware of what's going on around you.
- Runners are also reminded to ALWAYS carry identification with them when they go out. If carrying a license seems too inconvenient, please consider purchasing an identification bracelet or tag for your shoe. New products designed especially for runners, bikers and other athletes have recently come on the market. A simple internet search for "identification bracelet" will provide numerous results.
- Watch for cars entering or exiting driveways or backing up in parking lots.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs when driving; they impair your abilities and your judgment.

Remember no driver, bicyclist or pedestrian has sole right to the road. It is a shared space where we all have rights and responsibilities. So, you do your part, and we'll do ours!

The police officers assigned to our Patrol Division do proactive work to make our roadways safer on a daily basis through routine enforcement of traffic laws in their beats. We also have a dedicated traffic unit, which consists of seven police officers, four community service officers, and a sergeant. This group's primary aim is to improve traffic safety through education and directed enforcement of traffic laws.