

July 19, 2011

Sally Ellertson  
Public Information Officer  
141 West Renfro  
Burleson, Texas 76028-4261  
817-426-9622  
F: 817-426-9390  
[sellertson@burlesontx.com](mailto:sellertson@burlesontx.com)  
[www.burlesontx.com](http://www.burlesontx.com)

Bicyclists, remember to follow all state laws, wear a helmet, always be observant of the other vehicles on the road (it is easier for you to stop than a 3,000-pound vehicle to stop), and use crosswalks.

Know the rules of the road. One of the more dangerous times on the road is when you mix bicycle traffic with automobile traffic. And motorists, it's your duty to be observant of bicyclists and share the road.

Before a child takes that bicycle on the road, parents need to teach them that bicyclists are required to follow the rules of the road, just like the drivers of vehicles. Teach them to ride on the right side of the road and how to navigate an intersection. And, stress that helmets are the single most important piece of safety equipment. Adults need to follow these rules as well.

A motocross rider recently died during a competition. He was wearing a helmet, but it was the head injury that caused his death. While all kids may not be performing the same types of aerobatic tricks as that rider was performing, they still need to be protected while they are travelling around town or building their own jumps.

Yes, traffic laws do apply to kids if they are operating their bikes on the roadways. There are five main sections of the Transportation Code that pertain to bicycles.

- Section 551.101 (in plain language) states that a person riding a bike on a roadway or bike path has to do all of the things a person driving a car does, including stopping at red lights and stop signs and yielding the right of way when appropriate. Things that only apply to cars and trucks, such as wearing a seatbelt, do not apply to those riding a bike.
- Section 551.102 states that your bike needs to have a seat (or saddle) for each person, you need to have at least one hand on the handlebars, and you should not be towed behind a car or truck.
- Section 551.103 (the condensed version) states that riders shall ride as near as possible to the right curb or edge of the roadway, unless they are passing another vehicle, avoiding a surface hazard, or preparing to turn left. If the lane is too narrow for a bike rider and another vehicle to share, then the bike rider can ride in the center of the lane. If you are riding on a one-way street, then you can ride near the left curb. In general, don't ride

more than two abreast and only then if you can do so without impeding the normal flow of traffic.

- Section 551.104 states that a person may not operate a bicycle unless the bicycle is equipped with a brake capable of making a braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement. It also says that when riding a bicycle at night, the bicycle should be equipped with a headlight visible from a distance of at least 500 feet and either a red reflector on the rear or a red taillight.
- Lastly, 545.107 states that bicycle operators are required to signal their turns. A left turn is signaled by extending the left hand and arm horizontally. A right turn is signaled by extending the left hand and arm upward or extending the right hand and arm horizontally. Finally, a stop or decrease in speed is signaled by extending the left hand and arm downward.

For more information, call the Burlison Police Department at 817-426-9910.