

## Safety for All

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The purpose of this column is to share facts, figures, rules and courtesies to make our community safer for all of us who live, work, play or shop in Roseburg, whether we are drivers, bicycle riders or pedestrians, which includes wheelchair users. The column is written with the help of the Roseburg Bicycle/Pedestrian Coalition to improve safety of all modes of transportation in our city.

The Roseburg Police Department and the public depend on people doing the right thing. With this column, I hope that doing the right thing becomes clearer to bike riders, pedestrians and drivers. Doing the right thing can prevent a ticket or an accident and helps makes Roseburg a safer, more pleasant community.

According to state law, a crosswalk is simply any public road intersection, even a “T” intersection where one street deadends at another, whether marked or not. This means a painted crosswalk is no different in the law than any other intersection. If there’s a pedestrian at a street corner trying to cross the street, a bike rider or driver must stop for the pedestrian. The bike rider or driver must stay stopped until the pedestrian has safely crossed. To let the pedestrian know you are stopping, it is a good idea to slow down early and remain completely stopped. A creeping car creates confusion and violates the law in that the driver must stop and remain stopped. Another good rule of thumb is to stop 20 feet before the crosswalk. That helps the pedestrian know you see them and are yielding to them. Drivers must also avoid passing another driver who has stopped to permit a pedestrian to cross the street.

The law is specific about how much space drivers must give pedestrians crossing streets at crosswalks, whether marked or unmarked. A driver has to stop and remain stopped for a pedestrian crossing the driver’s lane and the lane next to the driver’s lane. When turning, a driver also has to stop and remain stopped when the pedestrian is in the lane into which the driver is turning, the next lane, or if there is a traffic signal, when the pedestrian is less than 6 feet from the lane into which the driver is turning. If the street has a crossing island, a driver does not have to stop if the pedestrian is on the other side of the street.

For safety’s sake pedestrians should wear bright colored clothing in the daytime and light colored or even reflective clothing during the evening. Pedestrians are not required to dress with visibility in mind. Walking in regular street clothes can make pedestrians difficult to see, especially in evening or nighttime hours and during foggy or rainy weather. Therefore, it is incumbent upon drivers to remain alert for pedestrians. Pedestrians should clearly show their intention to cross a street by preparing to step into the street, checking for oncoming traffic, etc., but must also realize that they must not

step directly into the path of an oncoming car or bike without warning or enough time for the car or bike to stop.

Drivers must also exercise caution when coming out of a driveway. They must stop before they get to the sidewalk. Drivers need to realize pedestrians on a sidewalk can approach from either direction, so drivers must always check for pedestrians coming from both directions before they cross the sidewalk. Although discouraged, riding a bike on a sidewalk is legal, except for downtown. A bike rider on a sidewalk must ride safely, give an audible warning before passing a pedestrian, yield the right of way to all pedestrians, and when a car is approaching, ride at a walking speed at a crosswalk or driveway. The Oregon Bicyclist Manual states you shouldn't ride bicycles on sidewalks because many crashes between cars and bikes occur on sidewalks, especially when riders go against the flow of car traffic. The Manual also says if you are going to ride on a sidewalk, be sure to ride slowly where cars might be turning as the cars will not be looking for bikes going faster than pedestrians. When riding legally, a bicyclist on a sidewalk or in a crosswalk has the same rights and duties as a pedestrian on a sidewalk or in a crosswalk. Drivers must yield to a bicyclist on a sidewalk or in a crosswalk.

A person cannot park, stop or leave standing a vehicle on a sidewalk or a crosswalk. The same rule applies to a bicycle lane except when momentarily loading or unloading property or passengers.

Pedestrians have rules too. A pedestrian must not quickly move into the path of an oncoming car or bike, and when crossing the street anywhere other than a marked or unmarked crosswalk, must yield to a car or bike. If there is a sidewalk adjacent to where a person is walking, they must use the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, they must walk on the shoulder away from traffic and facing on-coming traffic. A pedestrian is not allowed to start to cross the roadway facing a "Wait" or "Don't Walk" signal.

By remembering these rules and extending courtesy to our neighbors, whether driving, walking or riding a bike, we can help make our community a safer place for all of us.