

Cyclists and Motorists Getting Along

Eric Kratz is a Lee's Summit resident and a network engineer. Eric serves on the Livable Streets Advisory Board, a mayor-appointed, volunteer board whose goals include working to make our community and our streets more "livable," safe and accessible for all our citizens.

I serve on the Livable Streets Advisory board to help promote safe roads, sidewalks, paths, etc. and to educate the safety and law awareness for runners, walkers, bikers as well as motorists. I enjoy being outside running, walking, and cycling and I would like to make sure my city knows there are lots of people like me. This also makes for a more inviting city to both citizens and businesses to have the amenities like street lights, safe wide roads, and sidewalks.

Cycling safety is very important. Cyclists should always follow all street laws. The top complaint I hear from motorists is that the bicycles never stop at stop signs. This is very dangerous and against the law. Please follow stop signs and stop lights by putting your foot down so the motorists know you are stopping. Cooperate with the vehicles by yielding when required. Other things to make cycling safer include using lights at night, choosing the correct lane, using proper hand signals when turning, and most important, allow yourself to be seen. Make eye contact with the others on the streets so they know you are there.

Motorists can help by doing the following. Pass with plenty of room. In certain situations, a cyclist will move to the middle of the lane to avoid this so the car can use the next lane over. The two most common types of accidents involving a cyclist involve turning and not yielding. The first involves motorists turning left in the face of bicycle traffic. The second involves motorists turning right across the path of bicycle traffic. Please yield to the cyclist if you are turning instead of passing and cutting them off.

May is National Bike Month. May 13-17 is Bike-to-Work week and May 17 is Bike-to-Work day. The roads should be shared and both the cyclist and the motorist have rights to the space. Follow the rules of the road and both should be able to get along and share the roads.