

Town of Acton

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Town Manager

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Town of Acton Shares Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Tips

[Click here for a video produced by the Acton Police Department and ActonTV on pedestrian safety.](#)

ACTON -- In New England, walking and bicycling are never truly out of season, but with a number of serious accidents across the state this year, Town Manager John S. Mangiaratti and the Town of Acton wish to remind residents to take caution at the rail trail crossings and wherever you choose to walk, drive or ride.

"The rail trail is a wonderful place for residents looking to be active and enjoy the outdoors," Town Manager Mangiaratti said. "But the crossings are busy, and residents need to take caution in those areas regardless if they are driving, cycling, or on foot. We encourage residents to familiarize themselves with these tips to stay safe and have fun, especially once the weather improves for spring."

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has several safety tips for bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers alike:

Bicyclist Safety Tips:

- Wear a helmet that properly fits and adjust your bicycle properly to your height.
- Inflate tires and check your brakes.
- Make yourself visible to drivers regardless of the time of day by wearing neon, fluorescent or bright colors. Wear reflective tape or markings, or flashing lights.
- Keep both hands on the handlebars, unless signaling a turn.

- Watch out for potholes, broken glass, gravel, dogs, puddles and other potential road hazards.
- Make eye contact with drivers.
- Use proper turn signals.
- Point to road hazards for bicyclists behind you.
- State "passing on your left" or "on your left" when passing a pedestrian or other bicyclist.
- Avoid riding at night.
- Ride on the right, in the same direction as other vehicles.
- Obey traffic laws, including all signs, signals, and lane markings.
- Yield to traffic.
- Yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk.
- Ride in a straight line.
- Look before turning.
- Be cautious of parked cars that may have passengers opening doors, or that may attempt to pull into the road.
- Ride in bike lanes or on bike paths when possible.

Pedestrian Safety Tips:

- Follow the rules of the road. Obey traffic signs and signals.
- Walk on sidewalks whenever possible.
- If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic, as far from traffic as possible.
- Remain alert. Do not become distracted by electronic devices.
- Cross streets at crosswalk or intersections when possible.
- When crossing the street when a crosswalk or intersection is not available, cross in a well-lit spot during a gap in traffic that will provide enough time to cross safely. Continue watching for traffic while crossing.
- Look left and right before crossing the street, and look for vehicles that may be turning left or right as well.
- Do not assume a driver sees you. Make eye contact with drivers as they approach.
- Dress in highly visible, bright and reflective clothing and/or use a flashlight at night.
- Be cautious of cars entering or exiting driveways, or backing up in a parking lot.

Driving Safety Tips:

- Watch for pedestrians everywhere, at all times of day.
- Yield to bicyclists as you would to a motor vehicle. Do not underestimate their speed, especially when making a turn that crosses their path.

- Be cautious at parking lots, stop signs, when backing up, and when parking. Watch for other vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists at these times.
- Be cautious at night and during inclement weather, when visibility may be poor.
- Slow down and prepare to stop when turning or nearing a crosswalk.
- Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. Stop a safe distance away from the cross walk to give other vehicles ample time to see the pedestrians that are crossing so that they can also stop.
- Do not pass vehicles stopped at a crosswalk.
- Do not drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Drive within the speed limit.
- Follow slower speed limits in school zones and neighborhoods with signage that children are present.
- Drivers turning right on red need to look to the right and behind to avoid hitting a bicyclist that may be approaching from the right rear. Stop completely, look left-right-left and behind, and then turn right on red.
- Drive defensively.
- Give cyclists extra space. Do not pass them too closely.

Town Manager Mangiaratti also urges motorists not to rely solely on backup cameras. Always look before you go.

Additional Resources:

- [AAA Bike Safety Brochure](#)
- [AAA Pedestrian Safety Website](#)
- [AAA Distracted Driving Prevention](#)
- [SafeKids.org](#)
- [Printable Acton Police Department Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Brochure](#)

For any concerns about the maintenance of the rail trail please contact the Acton Department of Public Works at 978-929-7740 or Highway@actonma.gov

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