



Bicycle Safety

for Fun & Transportation

By: Lee Kaufman, Commissioner

Green Residents of Westchester

(GROW) Ecological Commission

Our roadways are generally designed for cars and trucks. Bicyclists are allowed to use all non-highway traffic lanes, including the shoulder, when available. Bicyclists can use sidewalks, too; however, pedestrians have the right of way. I have been a bike enthusiast for over 50 years. I use my bike to get to work, to get to meetings, to go shopping, to visit friends, and family, and sometimes just for the joy of riding a bicycle.

Rules of the Road

Be Seen: It is critically important to be where drivers will be looking for other vehicles. It is also helpful to wear bright colors as well as have lights and reflectors on your bike.

Be Predictable: Always ride with the flow (direction) of traffic. Use hand signals and position yourself in the proper lane when traveling, stopping, or making a turn. Obey traffic signs and signals.

Ride Defensively: Always be aware of what is happening around you and keep track of your escape options. Be sure you have a clear route through an intersection, before entering. Be aware of other traffic as you are crossing the intersection. Wear a helmet to protect yourself and set a good example for others.

Be Considerate: We all need to share the roads. It is far more comfortable and pleasant to be on the road, when we are nice to other users. Park and lock your bike in a way that will keep walkways clear and safe for all users.

Bikes are efficient and ecological: Riding a bicycle is more efficient than walking the same distance and uses less of your energy. Walking is great and almost everyone can and needs to walk more. If you have time constraints and places to be within Westchester, riding a bike is a great way to go. Having a rack, a basket, or a trailer makes doing errands like grocery shopping, or banking fun and quick. I look forward to seeing more smiling faces around town on their bicycles, having fun and getting where they need to be.

Enjoy your rides and be safe.

ridellinois.ORG

Offers bicycle safety quizzes in English and Spanish for adults, children, motorists and truck drivers. Find all the quizzes here:
rideillinois.org/safety/bike-safety-quiz/

A few Illinois’ Bike Laws:

Bicyclist’s Status: Traffic laws apply to persons riding bicycles. Bicyclists riding on a highway are granted all of the rights (including right-of-way Article IX) and are subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle, with certain exceptions. [5/11-1502]

Lane Positioning: When riding on roadways and bicycle paths at less than normal traffic speed, ride as close as practicable and safe to the right-hand curb or edge of roadway except:

1. When overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle proceeding in the same direction.
2. When preparing for a left turn.
3. When reasonably necessary to avoid fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, bicycles, motorized pedal cycles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards or substandard width lanes that make it unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb or edge. A “substandard width lane” means a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and a vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane.
4. When approaching a place where a right turn is authorized. When riding on a one-way highway with two or more marked traffic lanes. Here, bicyclists may ride as near the left-hand curb or edge of such roadway as practicable. [5/11-1505]

Riding Side-by-Side: Riding two abreast is permitted, if the normal and reasonable movement of traffic is not impeded. Riding more than two abreast is prohibited except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles. [5/11-1505.1]

Riding on a Shoulder: The law restricting driving on a shoulder shall not apply to any bicycle. [5/11-709.1]

Left Turns: Bicyclists may choose between a vehicular-style left turn or a pedestrian-style left turn. [5/11-1510]

For vehicular style left turns, proceed as if driving a vehicle, moving to the left lane or the left side of a single lane prior to the intersection. [5/11-801]

For pedestrian-style left-turns, ride near the right side of the roadway, cross the intersecting roadway, stop (as much as practicable out of the way of traffic), yield to any traffic and proceed in the new direction, while obeying any official traffic control device or police officer. [5/11-1510]

Hand Signals: Signals shall be given from the left side as follows: Left turn—hand and arm extended horizontally. Right turn—hand and arm extended upward, except bicyclists may extend the right hand and arm horizontally and to the right side of the bike. Stop or decrease of speed—hand and arm extended downward. [5/11-806] Signal not less than the last 100 feet before the turn, and while the bicycle is stopped waiting to turn. Signals need not be given continuously if the hand is needed in the control or operation of the bicycle. [5/11-1511]

Find more about Bike Laws here:

rideillinois.org/safety/bike-laws/

Be part of the conversation, GROW meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM in the Court room of Westchester Village Hall. Please join us.



Interested in Joining the GROW Commission?

The Green Residents of Westchester (GROW) Ecological Commission will have two 3-year terms open beginning immediately.

Purpose of the GROW Commission:

Our mission is to work to advise the Village and help educate the community in environmental programs and practices to improve the quality of our air, water and land, to reduce greenhouse gases, minimize waste, and reduce energy consumption. We work to be critical partners in beautification and ecological decisions. The commission shall also prepare, maintain, achieve objectives of, and sustain Westchester’s Climate Action Plan.

Responsibilities of GROW Commissioners:

Candidates must have ability and availability to participate in commission meetings, community education/outreach via local events, and contribute to the Village newsletter. Relevant knowledge, education or experience is helpful, but not required. Commission meetings are generally held the first Thursday of each month from 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm. Key to the commission being able to educate and engage residents for action on environmental issues/practices, individuals that have some availability outside of our monthly meetings are preferred. Westchester residents 21 years or older are welcome to apply. If you are interested in becoming a member of the GROW Commission, submit a copy of your resume/bio along with a cover letter/statement about your background and interests to:

Evie Slavic (eslavic@westchester-il.org)

Upcoming GROW Event:

Join the GROW Committee as an ECO Ally for the Fourth of July Parade on

Tuesday the 4th of July

Decorate your bicycles, helmets or trailers, and let’s ride the parade route together...

