



New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor
Michael R. Sandoval, Cabinet Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 29, 2021

May is National Bicycle Safety Month

Be safe on two wheels; think about safety before your feet touch the pedals

SANTA FE – Americans are increasingly riding bicycles to commute, for exercise, or just for fun. The New Mexico Department of Transportation reminds everyone, by law, bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as motorized vehicles; people’s choices, whether they are on two wheels or four, can affect the lives of those around them.

In 2019, 374 bicyclists were injured in crashes in New Mexico. Twenty-two of those crashes resulted in serious injuries and 9 were fatal.

“As a motorist, avoiding a bicyclist seems like a no-brainer, but too many people are still paying with their lives,” said Transportation Secretary Mike Sandoval. “Unfortunately, if there is a collision between a bicyclist and a vehicle, the bicyclist is most likely to be the one killed or injured. Everyone is responsible for safety on New Mexico roads.”

Drivers should remember speeding increases the chances of hitting or killing a bicyclist, and the higher the speed, the higher the risk the crash will involve a fatality. Speeding also increases a vehicle’s stopping distance, so even if the driver sees the bicyclist, the driver may not have enough time to stop.

“We live in an age of constant distraction where life gets hectic, and people get busy, but taking a few extra steps each day when you drive or ride could save a life,” said Sandoval. “Whether people choose to drive or ride, always show mutual respect to other road users.”

There are simple steps everyone can take to reduce the number of bicycle injuries and deaths.

For drivers:

- Look for bicyclists everywhere. Cyclists may not be riding where they should be or may be difficult to see—especially at dusk/dawn/night and in poor weather.
- Yield to bicyclists and do not underestimate their speed.

- Avoid turning in front of a bicyclist.
- In parking lots, at stop signs, when backing up, or when parking, search your surroundings for bicyclists.
- Obey the speed limit and drive defensively to avoid a crash with a cyclist.
- Give cyclists room. Do not pass too closely.
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Stay focused and slow down where children on bikes may be present, like in school zones and neighborhoods.

For cyclists:

- Wear a bike helmet, bright clothing during the day, and reflective clothing at night. Attach a front light, red rear lights and reflectors onto your bike.
- Drive with the flow, in the same direction as traffic.
- Obey street signs, signals, and road markings, just like a vehicle.
- Assume drivers don't see you; look ahead for hazards or situations that may cause you to wreck.
- No texting, listening to music, or using anything that distracts you by taking your eyes and ears or your mind off the road and traffic.
- Be cautious day and night when sharing the road with vehicles.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs when riding; they impair your judgment and coordination.

<https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/bicycle-safety>

###

NMDOT
Mobility for everyone

Marisa Maez, *Communications Director* | Marisa.Maez@state.nm.us | 505 469 8243