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Ride Safe on the Roads:***NHTSA and Kern County Public Works Urge Bicyclists to Practice Safe Habits***

KERN COUNTY, Calif. May 19, 2026 – Kern County Public Works is celebrating National Bike Month this May to raise awareness about the importance of practicing safe bicycling habits. The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Kern County Public Works urge everyone to be alert to keep bicyclists safe, as it takes drivers and bicyclists alike to ensure safety on the roads.

"Keeping bicyclists safe is essential because they are a vital part of our communities," said Kern County Public Works Manager, Yolanda Alcantar. "People of all ages rely on bicycles to get to school, work, and everyday activities, and every rider deserves safe streets. We encourage bicyclists to learn and follow local traffic laws, ride responsibly, and always wear a helmet."

Traffic safety is a shared responsibility. Vehicle drivers should always give bicyclists plenty of room on the roads, and bicyclists should always be aware of their surroundings.

In California, a bicycle is considered a vehicle when it is operated on the road. For this reason, bicyclists are required to follow the same traffic laws as vehicle drivers. NHTSA and Kern County Public Works offer the following tips to keep bicyclists safe.

Tips for Bicyclists – Before Heading Out

- Make sure your bicycle is the right size for you. It is difficult to control a bike that doesn't fit you properly.
- In addition to a properly fitting bike helmet, a bicyclist should wear bright clothing during the day and reflective gear at night to make them more visible on the road.
- Place a white front light and red rear light and reflectors on the bicycle for nighttime riding or when visibility is low.

Tips for Bicyclists – On the Road

- Ride in the same direction as traffic. Follow street signs, signals, and road markings.
- Do not drive distracted. Keep eyes, ears, and focus on the road and traffic.
- Watch for pedestrians and pass them with care by first announcing "on your left/right" or by using a bell.
- When crossing a street, slow down and look for traffic (left-right-left and behind). Be prepared to stop, follow traffic signals, and never assume drivers will see the bicyclist.
- It's best to avoid riding on the sidewalk, but if that is the only option, bicyclists should check their state's law to make sure it's legal.

Kern County Public Works is a department of the County of Kern and is responsible for the planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operation of roads, bridges, traffic signals, sanitary landfills, and publicly owned facilities. Kern County Public Works strives to provide quality public services including road permit inspection, building permit inspection and plan check, code compliance, engineering and surveying review of proposed land development, solid waste and hazardous waste disposal, wastewater treatment, public transportation, and community outreach, which serve to protect and enhance the lives of the people of Kern County. For more information, visit www.kernpublicworks.com and follow us on Facebook and Instagram @kerncountypublicworks.

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