

# Safety Reminder Email from the GFW Executive

September 26, 2019

This is a friendly safety nudge from your execs.

So far this year we haven't had any reported club safety incidents. We very much hope it stays that way.

Below are 10 safety-related challenges we can all relate to, followed *in italics* by reminders of alternative safer approaches.

1. Riding in the middle of the road and sometimes even on the wrong side of the road, riding 3, or even 4 abreast. This seems to happen often when people are trying to get "a run" at the next hill and are overly optimistic that they will pass those in front of them. The situation is made worse by members not moving to the right side of the road after passing someone.

*Never ride more than 2 abreast and limit to single file when conditions warrant or when the ride leader has requested to do so. And just like on the 401 with your car – don't stay in the passing lane after you've passed someone.*

2. Not confirming that there isn't a car behind you when passing another member or avoiding a rough section of road.

*Visually confirm it is safe to do so. Also, consider a helmet or handle bar mirror if you don't already have one.*

3. Not being predictable – e.g., not warning members when they are about to slow down or move over from their present path.

*Be predicable by signalling your intentions; avoid swerving or suddenly hitting the brakes.*

4. Doing sudden U-turns in front of cars.

*Again – confirm that there are no cars behind (or in front) of you first.*

5. Gathering in intersections with bicycles pointing every which way, making it impossible for drivers to tell what our intentions are.

*If we're confused about what we want to do next and we need a discussion, let's get off the road until we figure it out.*

6. Debating around altering the route or deciding to leave the route.

*Any concerns about the route should be shared with the ride leader. However, respect the ride leader's decision regarding route changes. Also, if you must leave the route, inform the ride leader or someone who can convey the message.*

7. Not always waiting for a fellow member who has fallen back for whatever reason.

*Some of the group are very good riders and get ahead without checking for dropped members. We check our mirrors or look behind for cars – let's get into the habit of checking for dropped members in the same way. It is very difficult for a person who has slowed on a steep hill or has to stop for a mechanical issue to catch up to the group.*

8. Riding on roads in the area that have severely deteriorated with potholes and multiple patches to the point that they may no longer be safe for club rides.

*The host should take this into consideration when planning a route.*

9. Not having waivers completed for guests who have been invited to join the club ride.

*We encourage members to invite guests. The member inviting guest(s) is responsible for ensuring that a waiver for each guest is completed before the beginning of the ride.*

10. Needing to cancel a ride due to potentially poor weather conditions.

*Keep in mind that hosts need to consider safety, visibility and road conditions. If the host decides, sometimes in consultation with others, that the ride should be cancelled, they can do so if there is time by way of a comment on the website prior to the ride or when members arrive at the start location. It is the host's option to go ahead with the social (pot luck or restaurant meal) portion of the evening.*

Let's watch out for each other to ensure we finish off the season incident free.

If you see something you think is wrong or unsafe, say so - politely and respectfully. Additionally, if someone has pointed out something that they think is unsafe that you are doing, try not to react defensively. It just means they want you and other members to stay safe.

Sincerely,

Your 2019 Exec Team - Barb, Richard, Pete, Brenda and Ruth