



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Primary Contact:

Stephanie Noll
BTA Education and Outreach Coordinator
(503) 226-0676 x23
stephanie@bta4bikes.org

Secondary Contact:

Captain Larry O'Dea
Traffic Division Commander
Portland Police Bureau
(503) 823-2247
lodea@portlandpolice.org

EYE TO EYE CAMPAIGN

PORTLAND POLICE BUREAU AND BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE LAUNCH NEW BIKE LIGHT EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT PROJECT

September 25, 2008 – As part of the Eye to Eye traffic safety campaign, the Portland Police Bureau's Traffic Division and the Bicycle Transportation Alliance have formed a partnership to educate new cyclists regarding good visibility practices and bike light laws.

The BTA will kick off the project on **Friday, September 26, 2008, 4:30-6:00 pm**, at the "Seven Corners" intersection of SE Division, SE Ladd, and SE 20th by serving "Mocktails" (non-alcoholic beverages) and giving cyclists information about lights and visibility. This launch will be followed by other outreach events by the BTA and targeted bike light education and enforcement actions by the Portland Police Bureau's Traffic Division. In the actions slated to begin next week, police will educate cyclists about light laws, install free lights (possible through an ODOT grant), and give cyclists other safety information. After the initial education missions, police will re-emphasize the message of safety by issuing tickets to cyclists riding after dusk without proper lights.

ORS 815.280 states that "a bicycle or its rider must be equipped with lighting equipment... during limited visibility conditions... (that) must show a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front of the bicycle... (and) a red reflector or lighting device... visible from all distances up to 600 feet to the rear..." A violation of these requirements has a maximum fine of \$90.

There are more new cyclists than ever on the roads and many people have only a rear red light, and not a front white light. Not only is this the reverse of what the law requires, it is also ineffective. People are afraid of being hit from behind, and believe they can prevent crashes with

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things in front of them, but they really can't - all of the top six types of bike crashes in Portland involve someone in front of, or to the side of, the bicyclist (like right hooks, left hooks, and t-bone crashes). Fewer than 10% of bike crashes nationwide involve a bicyclist being hit from behind. The front light is the most important light.

The Bike Light Education and Enforcement Project is part of the Eye to Eye campaign, a multi-city campaign that aims to foster awareness and respect on shared paths and roadways, making the streets of our communities safer for everyone. The Eye to Eye campaign brings together a coalition of partners representing all road users to bring important safety information to the public. More information can be found at www.SeeingEyetoEye.org

“We have heard loud and clear from BTA members that they are very concerned about the number of people riding at night with no lights. They are worried about these bicyclists' safety, and they also realize that bicyclists without lights scare drivers, pedestrians and other bicyclists, damaging the goodwill and good relations we need on the roads. We are excited about this partnership with the Portland Police Bureau Traffic Division that will help spread the word that lights are an absolute must for cyclists riding at night.”

-Stephanie Noll, BTA Education and Outreach Coordinator

“We strongly support the BTA's Eye to Eye campaign, and we believe increased visibility of people operating bicycles will enhance the safety of all road users.

-Captain Larry O'Dea, Portland Police Bureau Traffic Division

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance is a statewide non-profit organization that works to open minds and roads to bicycling. We represent bicyclists and the bicycle industry with over 5000 members in Oregon and SW Washington, and have seventeen years of experience in bicycle engineering, planning, education and advocacy.

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