

# Ohio's Safety Plan

## 2009 Update

### Emphasis Area 4 Special Road Users: Bicycles

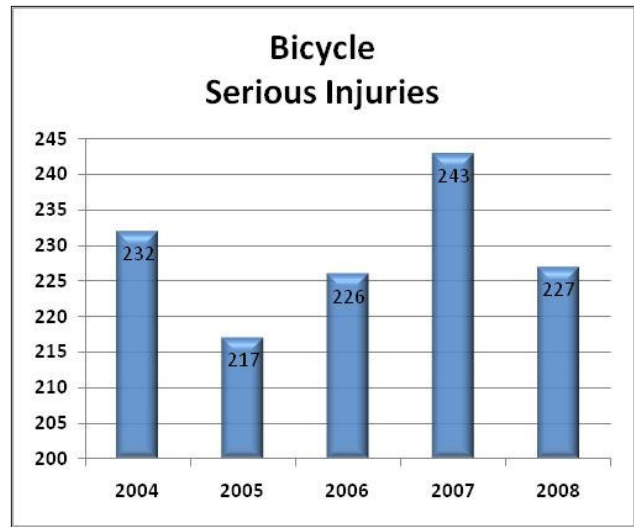
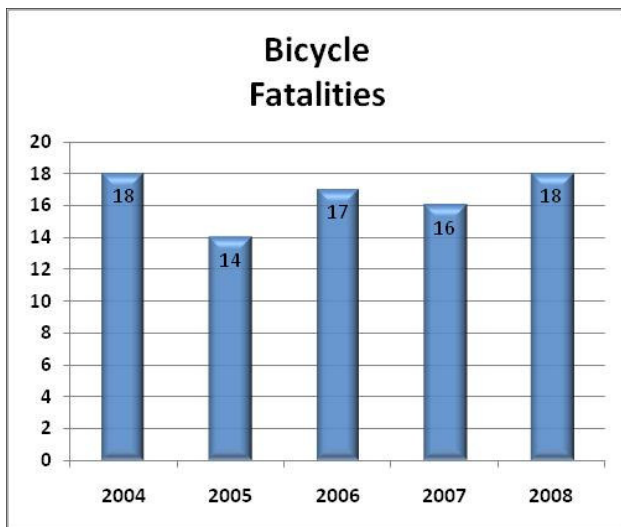


In 2008, 18 people died and 227 people were seriously injured in crashes involving bicycles. These crashes represented about 2 percent of all Ohio fatalities and serious injuries in 2008.

This number is significant when you consider the relatively small number of people in Ohio who are biking for recreation, errands or work. Ohio continues to focus on these crashes because when bicycles collide with cars and trucks, the consequences can be severe. This concern for bicycle safety will only grow as gas prices fluctuate and more people take up biking.

Of the fatal crashes that occurred in Ohio over the past five years:

- About 45 percent occurred within cities and 55 percent in rural areas. About 57 percent of the crashes occurred during the day.
- Bicyclists were at fault 53 percent; vehicle drivers were at fault 34 percent; 13 percent unknown.
- Common crash causes were bicyclists failing to stop at intersections or crossing into traffic, and vehicles striking bicyclists from behind.
- 25 percent of the riders killed were under age 18; 22 percent were 19 to 35; 36 percent were 36 to 55; and 17 percent were over 56 years of age.



#### Safety Tips for Riders and Drivers:

##### **Bicyclists should wear properly fitted helmets.**

Helmets are the most effective way to prevent head injuries in a crash.

**Bicycle riders must observe the same laws as vehicles**, including obeying signs, signals and pavement markings, and riding in the same direction as motorized traffic.

**Cyclists can increase their visibility on the road** by wearing bright, reflective clothing and by using front and rear lights and reflectors at night.

**Drivers must share the road with cyclists.** Allow at least 3 feet of clearance when passing cyclists; look for cyclists when opening car doors or pulling out from parking spaces; and watch for riders when making turns.

**State and local governments are also using various strategies to prevent these crash types.**

**Strategies include:**

Identify, review and address areas with a disproportionate number of bicycle crashes.

The Ohio Department of Transportation is working with local governments to identify these areas to make recommendations and investments that improve safety for cyclists in these areas.

Conduct Roadway Safety Audits (RSA).

ODOT is working with local governments to develop multi-disciplinary teams that conduct RSAs at problem locations.

Initiate Pilot Projects that incorporate Complete Streets concepts into the design.

ODOT has identified six pilot locations in 2010 where bike lanes, sidewalks, landscaping and other Complete Street concepts may be incorporated into the project after an analysis is completed.

Work with Metropolitan Planning Organizations and others to identify existing bike lanes and bike facilities.

ODOT is developing an inventory that will be used to create a database to guide future bike investments.

Develop training opportunities that encourage transportation planners and engineers and local governments to incorporate Complete Street design into community projects.

ODOT is sponsoring a statewide Complete Streets conference in March 2010. A second day of detailed design training will be offered to engineers and planners.

Develop education and enforcement programs focused on "Share the Road" principles.

ODOT and the Ohio Department of Public Safety are working with Safe Communities coalitions and bike advocacy groups in 2010 to identify pilot projects that could be funded through safety grants and other funding.

Continue to invest in Safe Routes to Schools federal funding in education, enforcement and engineering projects that encourage students to bike and walk to school.

ODOT will continue to provide funding to communities to:

- Develop School Travel Plans that encourage walking and biking.
- Build multi-use paths, add sidewalks, improve lighting, signage and pavement markings near school zones.
- Develop educational materials and events and increase law enforcement near school zones to encourage more students to walk or bike to school.
- Develop "Walk to School" events each October that expose school children to the benefits of active transportation.