



**SMOKY  
MOUNTAIN**  
W h e e l m e n

## Smoky Mountain Wheelmen Club Safety Policy

Your club takes safety very seriously. Cycling is an enjoyable activity that can have significant health benefits. Yet, like other physically active sports, cycling has many inherent risks.

These risks can be mitigated through the use of properly fitted and maintained equipment, by obeying traffic laws, by understanding proper “bike” etiquette when riding in a group, and most importantly, by always paying attention while cycling.

We welcome members who are as concerned with safe cycling as we are. An important step in joining the Smoky Mountain Wheelmen, or in renewing your membership is to read, understand, and accept the following Safety Policy.

### — Observe the Law

- Members should be aware that every person riding a bicycle on a roadway is granted all the rights and subject to all of the duties of the motor vehicle driver.
- Members shall obey all motor vehicle and bicycle laws of the state(s) in which they are riding.
- Members also should be familiar with Tennessee bike law.  
<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/bikeped/bikelaws.htm>
- Proper use of hand signals to indicate turning and/or stopping is required.  
[http://www.mafw.org/images/stories/public/hand\\_signals.pdf](http://www.mafw.org/images/stories/public/hand_signals.pdf)
- Always ride with traffic, never against it.
- State Law prohibits riding other than in single file when traffic can be impeded and Smoky Mountain Wheelmen supports compliance with this law.

### — Club Rules

- All members must sign-in at the ride start and provide the required emergency contact information.
- Helmets shall be worn on all Smoky Mountain Wheelmen rides.
- The use of cell phones, ipods, MP3 players, or any other device that requires headphones/earbuds is not permitted while riding.
- **Any member** who witnesses another member riding in such a manner as to endanger other cyclists should discreetly discuss their concern with that member, explaining the transgression(s) that have occurred, and the reason(s) they are hazardous. Should the offending member fail to correct their riding behavior a complaint should be made to the club’s Road Captain who will follow the club’s *Ride Enforcement Procedure*.

### — Ride Etiquette

- Be predictable. Call out your intentions, e.g. slowing, stopping, etc. Use hand signals.
- Call out and point to hazards e.g. Hole! Rough Road! Car Back! Glass! Gravel! etc.
- Immediately single-up when you hear “car-back” and repeat the warning so that riders in front of you are alerted.
- Always pass other riders on the left. In all cases, whenever passing a rider the “overtaking” rider shall call out “on your left”.
- Stop to regroup after crossing a traffic light controlled intersection so that riders who may not have been able to “make the light” will not be encouraged to cross on the red.
- Members must be courteous and share the road with motorized vehicles, pedestrians and other cyclists. This includes riding single file on busy roads, singling up quickly when “car back” is called, and leaving gaps in long pace lines to allow vehicles to safely pass.

- Notify the ride leader if you decide to “drop” or leave a ride before its completion.
- All members are strongly encouraged to accept valid criticism graciously and understand that the person delivering such criticism is doing so in the best interest of the club and all of its members.

#### — **Equipment**

- A proper fitting helmet is required on all club rides.
- Members shall ensure that their bicycle is in good condition, and that they know how to ride it properly.
- Members must carry a spare tube and should be capable of repairing a flat if necessary.
- Lights are required by law on any rides that extend past dusk.

#### — **Miscellaneous**

- Members shall be properly prepared for the ride they have chosen. This includes: choosing a ride of pace, length and terrain matched to their ability, having suitable clothing for the expected weather conditions, carrying adequate fluids, and carrying spare tubes, pump and tools, etc.
- **Each member** shall determine for themselves whether or not weather and road conditions are suitable for cycling and shall take full responsibility for cycling in any and all conditions that will be encountered during the course of the ride.
- It is highly advised that members carry a cell phone to summon help should they become lost, injured, or otherwise separated from the group.

### **Smoky Mountain Wheelmen Safe Riding Enforcement Procedure**

- **If members** observe others riding unsafely, they should communicate their concerns privately to the offenders.
- If there is no change in the conduct of concern, or if those concerns are not received constructively, the rider observing the conduct is encouraged to report it to the Road Captain or Ride Leader. The Ride Leader will share this information with the Club President and the Road Captain; they will investigate the issue and will use their judgment as to the seriousness of the offense. If they deem it to be warranted, they will speak to the offender about the conduct in question and request that he/she observe safer riding habits on Club rides. They may suspended or dismiss the rider from the Club if the conduct warrants it upon approval by the Board of Directors.
- If the offending rider is reported again for unsafe riding practices, the Road Captain and President will investigate and may choose to warn the repeat offender, either verbally or in writing, of the possibility of membership suspension if the conduct continues. Or, commensurate with the situation, they may immediately recommend to the Board of Directors a suspension of the rider’s membership in the Club.
- A third rider misconduct is immediate dismissal from the club upon approval by the Board of Directors.

Please keep the goals of the Club and the intent of this initiative in mind: we are here to enjoy safe and pleasurable riding with companionship. None of us is perfect – we all on occasion violate safe riding practices. We want to support each other in minimizing these occurrences while maintaining our environment of enjoyable and companionable riding.