



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

Smoky Mountain Wheelmen Rider Guidelines

Why you should care about safety and ride guidelines?

We are members of the League of American Bicyclists. We are insured through them for events and on our club rides. We are obligated to try to have safe rides. Safe rides requires you and every rider to be mentally and physically prepared to ride to help prevent accidents.

Smoky Mountain Wheelmen riding policy.

Have Fun. This is cycling, so HAVE FUN! There is something about riding a bike that brings a smile to one's face, and it's always more fun to ride in a group. If you follow our guidelines and make an effort to socialize a little with other riders, you will have a great experience.

Group Rides

For insurance reasons, only first time guests and members can go on Club rides. If you choose to join Smoky Mountain Wheelmen Bicycle Club for one of our rides, we ask you to adhere to the following guidelines.

Arrive on time with your helmet, water bottle, bike, spare tube, and properly inflated tires. Rides depart no later than 10 minutes after scheduled ride time **but may leave on time.** Please make sure your bike is in good mechanical order prior to arrival. Showing up late is asking your fellow bikers, who respect each other's time, to delay their departure so you can be accommodated. **That's not what group biking is about.**

It's a group ride, not an individual ride or a race. You should participate with the group and adhere to our safety rules and group ride policies. We encourage the group to stay together as much as possible. **If you want to ride by yourself, race, have difficulty adhering to our rules, or following a ride leader, then Smoky Mountain Wheelmen Club ride is not for you.**

Smoky Mountain Wheelmen club rides feature three ride classifications "A", "B", and a **"no drop policy"** for the "C" class rides which are the recreational and greenway rides. We are a recreational riding and social club — not a race club. We promote safe riding in a cooperative atmosphere to build camaraderie and have fun. "No drop" means the Ride Leader will have someone serving as sweeper who will keep up with those in the back. It also means, the entire group will regroup as frequently as needed until everyone catches up. No drop also means we will try to assist you (within reason) with any mechanical problems you encounter along the way — such as a flat tire. You are expected to know how to fix flat tires yourself and to show up with a well maintained bike, spare tubes, basic tools and fully inflated tires. You have an obligation to bring good personal biking skills to the group you're joining. We are a drug free club. For everyone's safety, never get on a bike if you're under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Safe Riding Practices identify those things that we believe will contribute to safer and more enjoyable cycling. How we behave as riders is directly related to our safety. The following practices will contribute to a rider's safety both individually and when riding in groups.

Safety and Courtesy

Please be courteous to your fellow riders and especially Ride Leaders since they are volunteers seeking to make the ride safer for you. The Ride Leader reserves the right to ask anyone who is discourteous to other cyclists, pedestrians, or motorists to leave the ride. Our safety depends on the goodwill of motorists. Making them angry by blatantly defying traffic laws or being discourteous creates an unsafe riding environment for the entire cycling community.

We require compliance with all laws pertaining to cyclists including that they should ride as if they are a vehicle. We also require that you maintain a safe following distance. Drafting is not considered safe in group rides.

Safe Cycling Practices — Obey all traffic laws — Bicycles are legal vehicles

- Wear a helmet that meets standards and fits correctly.
- Never ride in a group or alone, wearing headphones or earbuds. This includes iPods and MP3 players. It impairs your ability to hear warnings and your sense of the presence of others or vehicles nearby, endangering you and those you're riding with.
- Wear bright or light colors and use lights when warranted.
- Ride defensively: Be Visible, Alert, Assertive and Predictable Be responsible for your own personal safety — do not blindly follow. If you do nothing else, remember: A cyclist is probably behind you and another cyclist behind

him. Unpredictable moves will cause a problem for the entire group behind you. Multiple bikers are depending on you; so try not to do anything unexpected.

- Create enough space between yourself and other riders so you can evade sudden danger or someone stopping without signaling to you. Without training and practice, even a slight touch of your front wheel on another's rear wheel virtually guarantees a spill for you. A good rule of thumb is to leave at least one bike length of space at 15 mph and two bike lengths at 20 mph. This is the minimum, but it is not necessarily safe in all situations, and we encourage you to maintain even longer following distance to avoid pile-ups.
- Always know the location of nearby riders and vehicles
- Be courteous at all times and acknowledge courteous behavior, it doesn't help to anger drivers of vehicles even if they are driving dangerously. Get a license plate # and description if possible so you can call it in later.
- Ride in bike lanes when available
- Call out approaching vehicles: "Car Up;" "Car Back" and relay this on to the rest of the group
- Never rider more than two abreast. Do it if desired when bike lane width permits, but be alert to traffic and able to safely move to a single file when any vehicle is passing. The Left rider accelerates and right rider makes room when moving into single file. Single file is required when it could or does impede traffic. — ***There will be time to socialize at stops, before and after the ride.***
- Point out road hazards to those behind you, such as holes, railroad tracks or debris that may cause damage or injury
- Repeat these hazard signals you receive for riders behind you
- Move as far right as practicable to permit vehicles to pass safely
- Move into the road to pass other bikes only when vehicles are not present, let the rider you're overtaking know you are passing. Pass only the left and call it out: "On Your Left" — **Never pass on the right!!**
- Signal your intentions both visually and verbally, hand signal and call out "Slowing" or "Stopping" or "Turning"
- Leave the road completely when stopping to re-group or make repairs. All stops should be observed by clipping out at least one foot and touching it down. Do not block traffic.
- Take the vehicle lane when it would be dangerous to be passed by a vehicle or to make a left turn.
- Never trespass on private property.
- Don't litter.

Emergency Contact

Whether riding alone or with a group, you should always have available emergency contact information. We have become a society where you rarely learn more than someone's first name when you are on outing. Even in those times where you know their last name, many times you know very little about how to contact anyone in their family if something should happen to them. Use of Road ID, is one way to make sure someone can reach those important to you. If on a group ride, by completing the Ride Report accurately allows, the ride leader to know who you want contacted. By carrying our emergency contact form with you, you provide others with the information should it ever become necessary.