



NEWS RELEASE



Donald B. Smith

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MOTORISTS AND BICYCLISTS: **SHERIFF'S SAFETY REMINDER ABOUT ROAD SHARING RULES**

CARMEL, NEW YORK – JUNE 7, 2017: Putnam County Sheriff Donald B. Smith, who also serves as Chairman of the Putnam County Traffic Safety Board, is reminding motorists and bicyclists of the rules for sharing the road safely.

An amendment to the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law was enacted in 2010 that requires motorists to pass "at a safe distance" when overtaking a bicyclist travelling along the same side of the road. That law is commonly referred to as "Merrill's Law" because the legislation was prompted by the death of Mr. Merrill Cassell, an avid cyclist who was struck and killed by a passing bus while he was riding along a road in Greenburgh.

The Vehicle and Traffic Law also provides rules for sharing the road that bicyclists must follow. When riding along a road, bicyclists must use a dedicated bicycle lane if one is provided or, if not, then near the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway or upon a usable right-hand shoulder. Under the law, bikes must be ridden in a manner that prevents undue interference with the flow of traffic except when preparing for a left turn or when reasonably necessary to avoid conditions that would make it unsafe to continue along near the right-hand curb or edge.

Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway may not ride more than two abreast. Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway must ride in single file when being overtaken by a vehicle. Persons riding bicycles upon a shoulder, bicycle lane or bicycle path may ride two or more abreast if sufficient space is available, except that they must ride in single file when passing a vehicle, bicycle or pedestrian.

Any person riding a bicycle who is entering the roadway from a private road, driveway, alley or over a curb must come to a full stop before entering the roadway. Bicyclists under the age of 14 years old must wear helmets and children under the age of one may not be carried on a bicycle.

"We want everyone—motorists, bicyclists, joggers and pedestrians—to be able to enjoy safe travel along our roads," said the Sheriff, "and if we all endeavor to show care and courtesy toward each other in sharing the road, then we will all be safer." ###

APPROVED FOR RELEASE: *Captain William J. McNamara*