

September 12, 2013 /24-7PressRelease/ -- Preventing Bicycle Accidents: Cars Must Now Share the Road with Chicago's Divvy Bikes

In recent years, Chicago has taken great strides toward becoming a world-class city for bicyclists. In fact, Bicycling magazine rated Chicago the fifth most bike friendly city in the U.S., in no small part because of the city's plans to install 100 miles of protected bike lanes over the next four years as part of its Streets for Cycling 2020 plan. With many people turning to bicycles as a primary means of transportation, the popularity of bike sharing programs such as Divvy should come as no surprise. Users of the service should be careful, however, to avoid serious [bicycle accidents](#).

According to the city's official bike crash report, there were almost 9,000 bicycle accidents in Chicago from 2005 through 2010 that involved cyclist injury. Of these accidents, a total of 32 were fatal. As the number of people riding bicycles in the city has increased, so has the percentage of traffic accidents involving bicycles. While bike crashes accounted for only 6.7 percent of traffic accidents in the city in 2005, the percentage rose to 9.8 percent by 2010. Experts expect that increase to continue.

Services such as Divvy are a great resource for people who are new to biking or those who just want a simple way to get around the city. Unfortunately, this means that many Divvy users may be unfamiliar with the rules of the road and may be unequipped to ride safely.

Before renting a bike, Divvy users should take time to familiarize themselves with how to ride on Chicago's busy streets safely. Riders should stick to bike lanes whenever possible and should remember to stop for red lights and pedestrians in crosswalks. Importantly, Divvy riders should do their best to maintain a straight course in the bike lane. Swerving in the lane can put riders at risk of an accident.

Those considering renting a bike should also take time to make sure they are properly equipped before getting on a bike. Most importantly, this includes wearing a properly fitted bicycle helmet. Although many users may not think this is necessary because Divvy bikes are heavier and not as fast as other bikes, helmets can make all the difference in the event of an accident. Helmets also must comply with industry standards or the helmet manufacturer may be liable for an injury.

Unfortunately, no matter the amount of preparation that goes into planning a ride, accidents can

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happen even when a bicyclist follows all of the rules. Car drivers must also follow the rules by doing such things as not opening the driver's side car doors into the path of a cyclist. Drivers are also expected to use caution when passing a cyclist and stay at least three feet away from the cyclist at all times. If you are injured while biking, a personal injury attorney can help you understand what you need to do to receive compensation.

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