

Sharrows may play role in the reduction of Long Beach bicycle accidents

Written by Australian Business

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The number of bicycles on Long Beach roads has increased over the last decade. Thus, it may not come as a surprise that the number of bicycle accidents was also climbing.

Green sharrows installed in 2009 were a part of a federal pilot project to reduce the number of bicycle crashes. The green markings line the right hand lanes in both directions on Second Street from Bay Shore Avenue to Livingston Drive.

Recent traffic accident statistics show that accidents have decreased in the busy area. While it might not be the direct cause of the sharrows, many safety advocates have noted that fewer bicycles are riding on the sidewalks. The sharrows are also keeping cyclists out of the "door zone," which seems to be preventing crashes with parked cars.

The total number of car, bike and pedestrian crashes fell to 12 in 2012 from the 43 reported in 2009. Based on statistics from the first part of 2013, that number may again be on an upward trajectory with projections of 24 accidents by the end of this year.

Continued educational campaigns may help to raise driver awareness of the sharrow's purpose and further reduce accidents. With an increase in the number of riders, motorists need to watch for cyclists especially while turning. Common causes of California bike accidents

The most common causes of California cycling accidents are when motorists:-Make unsafe left or right turns in front of a moving bicycle.-Open a car door into the path of a cyclist.-Run a red light or stop sign.

Bicycle riders can reduce their chance of an accident by riding with traffic and following traffic rules, such as stopping for a stop sign. A headlight or reflector on your bike and a helmet are two other ways to protect yourself while riding.

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Even taking these precautions, you cannot influence the driving of motorists sharing the road. A driver who takes his or her eyes off the road to fumble with a GPS or someone who speeds through a red light is driving recklessly. You may not be able to react fast enough to avoid a collision. Cyclists suffer more severe injuries in these accidents, because they do not have the protection of a steel frame or airbags. It can take months to heal from a concussion let alone a more serious injury.

Following a cycling accident, a California personal injury attorney can advise of possible remedies. Depending on the circumstances, you may be entitled to receive compensation for your medical costs, lost wages and pain and suffering. An experienced attorney can assist in negotiating a fair settlement with the insurance company while you focus on recovery.