

Have Fun Outdoors – Safely!

It's a beautiful day — the sun is shining, the birds are chirping. What could be more perfect than a bike ride? Bike riding is a lot of fun, but accidents happen. The Bergen County Department of Health Services reminds all residents to wear a helmet while riding.

Every year, about 300,000 kids go to the emergency department because of bike injuries, and at least 10,000 kids have injuries that require a few days in the hospital. Some of these injuries are so serious that children die, usually from head injuries. According to the Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), wearing a bike helmet can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent. It can save your life.

A head injury can mean brain injury. That's why it's so important to wear your bike helmet. Wearing one doesn't mean you can be reckless, but a helmet will provide some protection for your face, head, and brain in case you fall down.

CPSC offers the following tips on how to correctly wear a helmet:

- Wear the helmet flat atop your head, not tilted back at an angle.
- Make sure the helmet fits snugly and does not obstruct your field of vision.
- Make sure the chin strap fits securely and that the buckle stays fastened.

Since February 1999, all bike helmets manufactured or imported for sale in the United States have to meet the federal safety standard set by CPSC. This standard ensures that bike helmets will adequately protect the head and that chin straps will be strong enough to prevent the helmet from coming off in a crash, collision or fall.

Helmets meeting the standard carry a label stating that they meet CPSC's safety standard. This will help eliminate confusion among consumers about which certification mark to look for when buying a helmet.

A New Jersey law makes it mandatory to wear a bicycle helmet. Wearing one makes good sense! Protect yourself, friends and family members every time you ride. Make sure everyone has a helmet that meets standards and is wearing it properly.

For a copy of the brochure, Safe Bicycle Riding in New Jersey, call the Health Promotion Request Line at 201-634-2704. Be sure to leave your name and mailing address.