

March Transportation Safety Newsletter: St. Patrick's Day

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March 2024

Saint Patrick's Day



Driving after drinking could cost you a pot o' gold or worse. Don't push your luck, Oregonians. If you've been drinking, call a sober friend, rideshare, or taxi to get home safely. Buzzed driving is drunk driving. Make a plan for a safe ride home this Saint Patrick's Day.

Rules of the Road – Following Too Close

Keep your distance. When drivers tailgate, they significantly reduce their stopping distance – or the distance needed to come to a complete and safe stop. Maintaining a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you gives you a better view of the road and other traffic, so you can anticipate problems and have more time to react. A safe following distance is 2-4 seconds in good weather conditions to provide extra time for road hazards, poorly secured loads, and changing traffic conditions. During inclement weather, heavy traffic, or night-time driving, increase your following distance for added safety.



Driver Education: It Saves Lives, Reduces Crashes

The first six months after obtaining a driver license tend to be the most dangerous for teenage drivers across the nation, but Oregon's graduated driver licensing program has improved safety since it started in 2000. Motor vehicle crashes are the No. 1 cause of death for 15- to 20-year-olds.

A national study shows teens who take formal driver training in Oregon have much lower crash rates. Yet only about a third of eligible Oregonians actually sign up for driving classes, saying they don't have the time, money, or easy access to them. Oregon teens who took an approved ODOT driver education course have fewer crashes, traffic convictions, and suspensions. [Find an ODOT-approved driver education course near you.](#)



Myth Busters: Are Bike Lanes Bad for Business?

If bike lanes are prioritized over parking, will businesses struggle to attract and retain customers? Kittleson and Associates shared an article to bust this myth.

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Oregon Community Paths Program

Oregon Community Paths Program invests in facilities that are not primarily on or along a roadway. These off-system paths may be pedestrian or bicycle paths or path segments such as regional paths that connect communities or larger paths or critical links that connect to major destinations, such as employment centers, schools, large transit stations, etc. We will begin accepting the required "pre-application" in August, but first, we have a series of webinars scheduled to help get you ready to apply.



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Grant Program Accepting Applications

We are excited to announce ODOT's [Safe Routes to School](#) grant program is now open and accepting applications [through March 25](#).

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Bike, Walk, Roll to School Updates

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) advances students' options to bike, walk, and roll to school by supporting safety-oriented programs and infrastructure. In 2023, schools and communities worked hard to increase their capacity and innovate. The statewide offerings continued to evolve on both the education and construction sides of the program. This report is a summary of the statewide ODOT SRTS program throughout 2023.



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Work Zone Safety Billboard Contest

High school students in Oregon have an opportunity to design a billboard to educate drivers – especially young drivers – about the dangers of work zones and encourage safe driving. Imagine seeing your design on a giant billboard and realizing the impact it could have on people's lives! And bonus, students could win \$250 and bragging rights.

The spring contest is for students who live in the following counties: Douglas, Curry, Coos, Josephine, Jackson, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Jefferson, Wheeler, Crook, Deschutes, Lake, Klamath, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Baker, Grant, Harney, and Malheur. Students may work independently or as part of a team. Spring contest submission deadline: 5 p.m., March 15, 2024.



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