

Bicycle Delivery Driver Dies after Colliding with Car

Industry: Food Service

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Task: Food Delivery by Bicycle

Occupation: Bicycle Delivery Driver

A 23-year-old fast food restaurant bicycle delivery employee was fatally injured while making a delivery. The victim was riding a brakeless fixed-gear bicycle downhill on a two-lane city street with a slight slope. Fixed-gear bikes do not coast and the pedals are in constant motion. A car traveling in the opposite direction entered an intersection and began a left-hand turn in front of the cyclist. The car stopped with its front end crossing the center yellow line into the bicyclist's lane of travel. The victim, who had the right of way, hit the car's front end and was thrown from his bike. He hit the car's windshield before landing on the pavement. The victim was taken to a hospital where he died from his head and neck injuries. He was wearing a bicycle helmet that met the Consumer Product Safety Commission safety standards. The victim had worked for his employer for about 1½ years and was considered one of the fastest bicycle delivery drivers. According to the employer's accident log, he had been struck by a car three times previously during bicycle deliveries.



Fixed gear bicycle involved in incident

Employer Requirements

- Develop a formal accident prevention program that is tailored to the needs of their particular workplace hazards. See WAC 296-800-14005.
- Ensure that appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is selected for employees if hazards are present or likely to be present. See WAC 296-800-1615.

Recommendations

- Inspect all bicycles before using and ensure that they have:
 - A functioning brake system. Although fixed gear bikes meet the Revised Codes of Washington (RCW) 46.61.780(2) standards, they should only be used by experienced riders. If riding a fixed gear bike, equip it with front hand brakes.
 - Reflectors and lights to increase visibility.
 - Appropriate tire pressure.
 - No damaged parts or equipment (e.g., tires, chain and sprocket).
- Use bicycle safety equipment that meets recognized safety standards including:
 - Helmets that meet the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Requirements for Bicycle Helmets 16 CFR Part 1203 (<http://bit.ly/HORAYT>).
 - Replacing helmets as recommended by the manufacturer.
 - High visibility clothing; for night riding, ensure that clothing meets American National Standard Institute 107-1999 class 2 garment standards.
 - Protective eyewear such as sunglasses or safety glasses.
- Make sure you're capable of stopping quickly without losing control. In high traffic areas travel at slower speeds to increase response time.

Resources

- Ten Smart Routes to Bicycle Safety by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:
<http://tinyurl.com/10smartroutes>
- Washington State Bicycling Laws:
<http://tinyurl.com/wsdot-bikelaws>
- Washington State Department of Transportation Bicycle Safety Tips:
<http://tinyurl.com/wsdot-bike-safety>
- Free Bicycle Safety Inspection Checklist from City of Fresno:
<http://tinyurl.com/fresnobikelist>
- How to Not Get Hit by Cars:
<http://bicyclesafe.com/>

Need More information?

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