

MAFW SAFETY POLICY

Safety is the club's top priority. Cycling is an enjoyable activity that has significant health benefits. Yet, like other physically active sports, cycling has many inherent risks.

These risks can be mitigated through the use of properly fitted and maintained equipment, by obeying traffic laws, by understanding proper "bike" etiquette when riding in a group, and most importantly, by always paying attention while cycling.

We welcome members who are as concerned with safe cycling as we are. An important step in joining the Morris Area Freewheelers, or in renewing your membership, is to read, understand, and accept the following Safety Policy.

1 - Obey the Law

- Every person riding a bicycle on a roadway is granted all the rights and is subject to all of the duties of the motor vehicle driver.
- Obey all motor vehicle and bicycle laws of the state(s) in which they are riding.
- Be familiar with [New Jersey bike law](#). "
- Use proper [hand signals](#) to indicate turning and/or stopping.
- Always ride with traffic, never against it.
- Always obey all traffic signals.
- State Law prohibits riding other than in single file when traffic can be impeded.

2 – Follow Club Rules

- Sign-in at the ride start and provide the required emergency contact information.
- Wear a helmet on all MAFW rides.
- Do NOT call out "Clear!" at an intersection. Conditions can change for the following riders faster than you think.
- Do NOT use earphones or earbuds while riding.
- Do not use anything that will distract you or another member while riding. This includes checking cell phones, smart watches and any audio devices such as speakers playing music.
- If you witness unsafe riding, discreetly discuss their concern with the member concerned, explaining the transgression(s) that have occurred, and the reason(s) they are hazardous. Should the offending member fail to correct their riding behavior a complaint should be made to the club's Safety Coordinator (see "Contact Us") who will follow the club's [Safe Riding Enforcement Procedure](#).

3 – Practice Ride Etiquette

- Be predictable. Call out your intentions, e.g. slowing, stopping, etc. Use hand signals.
- Call out and point to hazards e.g. Hole! Rough Road! Car Back! Glass! Gravel! etc.

- Single-up immediately when you hear “car-back” and repeat the warning so that riders in front of you are alerted.
- With few exceptions, always pass other riders on the left. Always, call out “on your left” or “on your right” when passing another rider.
- Stop to regroup after crossing a traffic light controlled intersection so that riders who may not have been able to “make the light” will not be encouraged to cross on the red.
- Be courteous and share the road with motorized vehicles, pedestrians and other cyclists. This includes riding single file on busy roads, singling up quickly when "car back" is called, and leaving gaps in long pace lines to allow vehicles to safely pass.
- Notify the ride leader if you decide to “drop” or leave a ride before its completion.
- Accept valid criticism graciously and understand that the person delivering such criticism is doing so in the best interest of the club and all of its members.
- Do not follow other riders too closely. Your front wheel must **never** overlap the back wheel of the rider in front of you.
- If your bike has aero bars, do not use them on club rides, particularly in pace lines.

| 4 – Use Proper Equipment

- Required items:
 - Proper fitting helmet.
 - Bicycle in good working condition.
 - At least one spare tube, tire levers, and pump or CO2 cartridge with inflator and should be capable of repairing a flat if necessary.
 - Lights are required by law on any rides that extend past dusk and a good idea for all rides.
 - Some source of hydration - water bottle or “camelback”.
 - Identification (on your body, not saddlebag), RoadID is a good option
 - Cue sheet. Be sure to add the ride leader’s phone number if you don’t already have stored in your phone.
- Recommended items:
 - backup tube and CO2 cartridge
 - mirror (handlebar or helmet/glasses)
 - cell phone (ringer turned on)
 - food in case food stop closed
 - electrolyte pills
 - first aid kit
 - space blanket (in cold weather)
 - aspirin/ibuprofen
 - benadryl (for allergic reaction)
 - band aids
 - gauze tape
 - antiseptic wipes
 - clotting sponge

- Optional items:
 - patch kit
 - multi-tool
 - screw driver (to be used if chain gets jammed)
 - cash
 - tire boot (dollar bill or wrapper can be used)
 - zip ties
 - chain tool
 - spare chain link
 - spare spoke
 - spoke wrench
 - sun screen
 - safety pins

5 – Use Common Sense

- Be prepared for the ride you have chosen. [Choose a ride](#) of pace, length and terrain matched to your ability, wear suitable clothing for the expected weather conditions, carry adequate fluids, and carry spare tubes, pump and tools, etc.
- Determine for yourself whether or not weather and road conditions are suitable for cycling and take full responsibility for cycling in any and all conditions that will be encountered during the course of the ride. If road conditions are unsuitable, a ride leader has the discretion of cancelling a ride. If a rider chooses to proceed, they do so at their own risk; without club insurance coverage.
- Carry a cell phone to summon help should you become lost, injured, or otherwise separated from the group. Please turn the ringer on your phone on during the ride in case the Ride Leader tries to call you. Always have the phone number of the ride leader in case you, or another rider becomes injured, should you make a stop not indicated on the cue sheet, detour from the ride for any reason or abandon the ride.