



Eveleth Cops for Kids

Helmet Safety Award Program

In a community effort, the Eveleth Police Department has teamed with local sponsors to offer a Bicycle Helmet Safety Award Program. This program is offered during the bicycling season, and has been well received. The program is designed to encourage children to wear helmets when riding their bikes, and rewarding them for doing so. The program promotes positive interaction between our officers and young residents. If an officer is on patrol and observes a younger person wearing their helmet while riding their bike, scooter, skateboard or inline skates, they will attempt to get the young person's name and telephone number. That young person will then be entered into a drawing for a brand new bicycle at the end of the summer.



Additionally, officers can give the young person an "I Got Caught" ticket that will entitle them to receive a free ice cream cone at any participating Dairy Queen restaurant. The following facts demonstrate the need for encouraging our youth to always wear a helmet when bicycling.

Helmet Facts



Bicycle-related head injuries cause:

- + Two-thirds of bicycle-related deaths each year
- + One-third of non-fatal bicycle injuries each year
- + More than 600,000 emergency department visits each year

Universal helmet use could:

- + Save one life each day
- + Prevent one head injury every four minutes

Who is at greatest risk?

- + Children ages 5-15 experience the largest percentage of bicycle deaths and injuries. The death rates for bicyclists ages 5-15 is nearly twice the rate for all bicyclists.

Finding a Helmet



Snug Stable Fit

You can't get the most protection from your helmet unless it fits well. The helmet should be comfortably touching the head all the way around. It should be level on the head and stable enough to resist even violent shakes or hard blows. You want the helmet as low on the head as possible to maximize side coverage, fitting uniformly all the way around, with the strap comfortably snug so that you can still open your mouth but the strap does not pinch, bind or cut into your chin, and the helmet cannot be made to rock back and forth more than an inch or so.

The Right Size Helmet

Helmets come in many sizes and shapes: egg-shaped, pointy, elongated, narrow or wide. Helmet manufactures have different adaptations to producing a helmet that fits as many heads as possible. You should be prepared for the eventuality that the helmet you are trying to fit may not

be compatible with your particular head.

Using the Fit Pads

Helmets always have at least one set of fitting foam pads for the inside. Many come with more than one set, and the second or even third set of thicker pads can be used to customize the shape. Adjust the side fits pads by using thinner or thicker pads where there is a space, adding thicker pads on the sides for narrow heads, or thicker pads in the back for shorter heads. You may also move pads, particularly on the "corners" in the front and rear. The objective is to make the helmet fit with pads touching all the way around, without making it so tight that it will be a constant nuisance. The helmet should sit level on the head, with the front just above the eyebrows, or if the rider uses glasses, just above the frame of the glasses so it does not bump on them.

A note on air channels: for maximum coolness you may want to leave gaps in the fitting pads around the head to let air flow in.

Adjust the straps

You want the chin strap snug against your chin, with the V of the side straps meeting just below your ear with no slack to let the helmet rock back and forth. First, adjust the length of the rear (nape) straps, the length of the front straps, and the location of the V fitting where the straps come together. That may involve sliding the straps through the top of the helmet to get the length of the chin strap so it is comfortably snug. If it hangs down visibly or you can slide two fingers under it, it is too loose. If it cuts into your chin and is not comfortable, it is too tight.

When you think the straps are about right, shake your head around. Then put your palm under the front edges and push up and back. Can you move the helmet more than an inch or so from level, exposing your bare forehead? Then you need to tighten the strap beside and in front of your ear, and perhaps loosen the rear nape strap behind your ear. Again, the two straps should meet just below your ear. Now reach back and grab the back edge. Pull up. Can you move the helmet more than an inch? If so, tighten the nape strap. When you are done, your helmet should feel solid on your head and comfortable. It should not bump on your glasses when you ride (if it does, tighten the nape strap). You should forget you are wearing it most of the time, just like a seat belt or a pair of shoes. If it impinges on your riding enjoyment, something is wrong. If it still does not fit, keep working with the straps and pads, or try another helmet.

Link to Minnesota Statute 169.222 Operation of Bicycle

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=169.222>