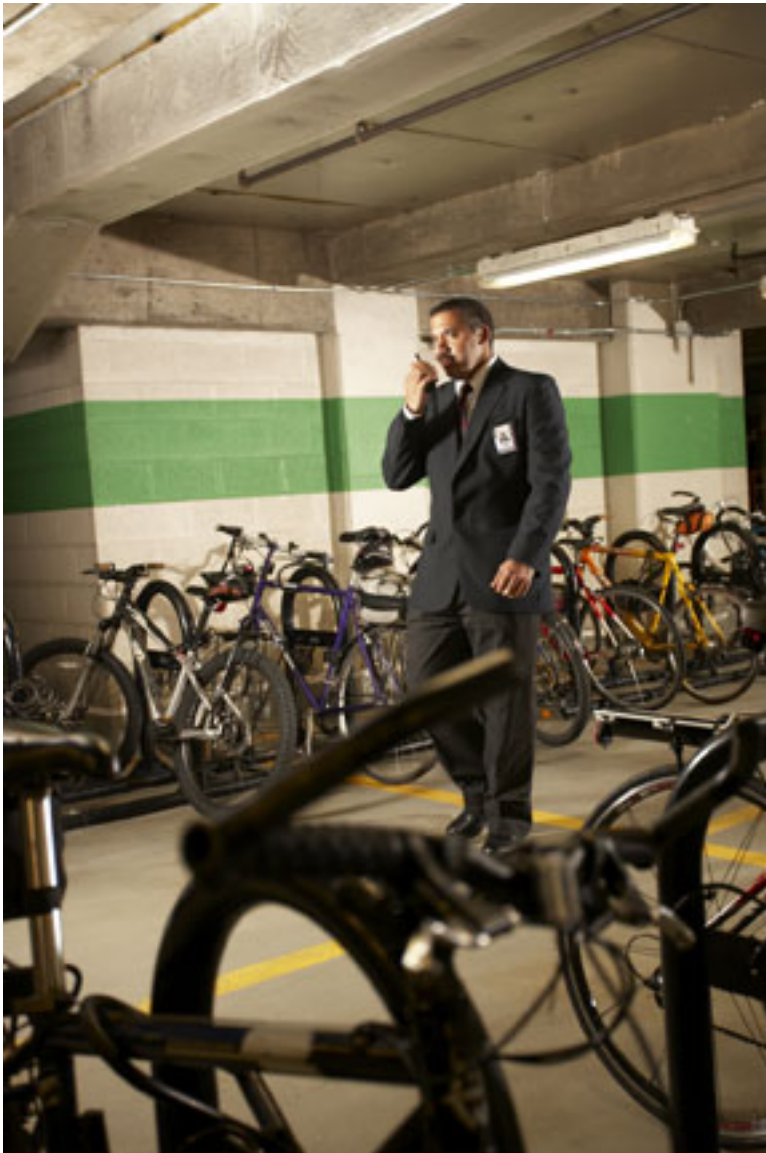


Security guru Ken Bower gives tips on bicycle commuting safety

Written by
Friday, 20 August 2010 13:29



“Sharing the road with bicyclists is very important, especially when commuting on busy city streets,” writes security guru Ken Bower, Vice President and General Manager for AlliedBarton Security Services, the industry’s premier provider of highly trained security personnel. “Today, bicycling has become popular as an environmentally friendly and cost effective transportation alternative as well as a fun and healthy recreational activity. Novice and experienced cyclists need to make safety a top priority. Ken Bower offers Insight News the following tips on Bicycle Safety:

Cyclists must obey traffic laws - Do you think that riding on the sidewalk is safer than riding in the street? Cycling on the sidewalk means having to dodge pedestrians, pets, garbage cans, parking meters and signs. Bicycles are considered vehicles and cyclists should obey the same traffic laws as motorists. Travel on the right side of the road with traffic, and do not ride on the sidewalk. Obey all stop signs, traffic lights and lane markings. Use proper hand signals before making any lane changes or turns.

Choose a route that is safe for cyclists - When considering your route, don't think like a motorist. Think like a cyclist. Pick the most pleasant route. Consult Google Earth or Bikely.com

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to research your trip. Ask your local department of transportation if they have a bike route map. Talk to a professional at your local bike shop or bike club to find out what routes are the safest. Additionally, many cities have implemented bike lanes specific for bicycle commuters. Be aware of other users on bike paths, such as folks with strollers or dogs. Announce that you are passing on the left when overtaking someone on the bike path.

Maintenance and repair make for a safer commute - Make sure all parts are in good repair, and check your brakes, tires and gears often. Have a bike expert teach you the basics so that you can continue routine maintenance. Your bicycle should be equipped with reflectors and lights. The most common repair you will encounter as a bike commuter will be a flat tire. You should also monitor brake wear. Many bicycle shops, community colleges, adult education programs or bicycle organizations offer workshops or classes in bike repair. Check for classes in your area. Replace your chain every 2,000 miles or so. Clean and oil your chain frequently, especially after riding in the rain, and replace it regularly.

Parking your bike securely - Where do you leave your bike once you get to where you are going? More than half of the one million bikes stolen every year weren't locked. Find a solid object, a street sign or post and secure your bike onto it with a good lock (or more than one, to further discourage theft). Make sure that the pole has something on top that will prevent your bike from being slid over it. The safest object to lock your bike onto is a bike rack. You could also ask your manager or supervisor for a storage area where they'll let you leave your bike for the day if you are commuting to work.

Safety equipment - Safety equipment begins with the helmet. Wearing an approved helmet can reduce the risk of a head injury by up to 85-percent in the event of an accident. Modern helmets protect better and are well ventilated.

Try to avoid riding your bike at night - However, if you must commute in the dark, you will need effective lighting and reflective equipment. Most states require some kind of front illumination, and it is safer to have a headlight and rear flashers. There are a variety of inexpensive flashers available. Additionally, your clothing should be bright and have reflective strips.

It is also important to carry small repair and first aid kits with you. For the minor repairs you might expect with everyday bike commuting carry a patch kit, a spare inner tube, an air pump and a multitool.