

The STRAIGHTTALK

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The Newsletter

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5 Tips to Increase Bicycle Safety



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Calendar

- ◆ Seattle International Beerfest 7/01-7/03
- ◆ Independence Day 7/04
- ◆ Bastille Day 7/14
- ◆ Bite of Seattle 7/15-7/17

It's Getting Hot!!!
Who wants some free Jamba Juice?!
See Back for Details

Here in Washington, we wait very patiently for the sun to come out in the summer. Once it does, it seems as though everybody in the state gets outside for some kind of activity. For the casual outdoor enthusiast, this usually means wiping the cobwebs off the bicycle in the basement and using it as transportation. There is no doubt that this is fun to do, but biking in urban environments also carries added risk factors that everyone should be aware of. Here are some key tips to staying safe while riding your bike this summer:

1) **Stay Off the sidewalk**—I understand that drivers may get impatient if there is no bike lane and you are out in the street, but that is both legal and much safer than riding on the sidewalk. The problem with being on the sidewalk is that drivers have a much more difficult time seeing you when making a turn. Stay on the street, because that is where oncoming traffic can see you.

2) **Wear a Helmet**— While it may not be state law just yet, many cities and counties require bicyclists to wear helmets. King County, Tacoma, Renton, Puyallup, Spokane, and Lakewood are just a few of these municipalities that do so. If you aren't one that is convinced to do something merely because it is the law, consider why it is the law. According to recent studies, helmet use

has been estimated to reduce head injury by 85 percent.

3) **Ride With Traffic**— It may feel more natural to ride against traffic so you can see cars coming at you, but it is one of the most dangerous things you can do. First of all, there is a substantially lower reaction time between you and the car coming your way. If you are riding with traffic, a car has more time to see you and react to anything that may happen.

4) **Get a Headlight and a Flashing Backlight**— If you are riding at night, this is absolutely essential. If you don't have both of these, you are putting yourself in a very dangerous situation. First off, the law requires it. Secondly, even if you have perfect vision, drivers on the road likely do not. Visibility is very low at night, so make sure you are as noticeable as possible.

5) **Ride Slow and Avoid Blind Spots**—Two very simple concepts in one. While bicycles are clearly a part of our transportation culture, they are difficult to see and rarely looked for by drivers. Riding slow and avoiding blind spots will allow you to react to other drivers and put some control in your hands.

For more information on bicycle safety, check out: www.plg-pllc.com/resources/articles

Jason Visits A-I High School to Discuss Texting While Driving

Jason brought his organization, Teens Against Distracted Driving, to A-I High School last month to discuss the dangers of texting while driving. Joining Jason were State Trooper Guy Gill and Diana Jones, mother of Ashley Davis-Jones, who passed away in a texting while driving accident. The assembly went great, and we would like to thank all of the students for taking the message seriously and pledging to never text and drive! Here are some pictures from the assembly...



Jason addressing the students at A-I High School



Trooper Guy Gill speaking to the students about the harsh reality of their decisions on the road

Jason showing the students just how long their eyes are off the road when they text and drive



Diana Jones giving an emotional talk about the effect texting while driving can have on an entire family



Want to Set off Your Own Fireworks this Year?



Setting off your own fireworks is illegal in most cities around the Puget Sound area, but on the 4th of July, a few allow for people to set off fireworks in a safe manner. Here is a list of those cities where this is allowed:

- Auburn
- Bothell
- Duvall
- Kent
- Mercer Island
- North Bend
- Skykomish
- Unincorporated King County
- Black Diamond
- Covington
- Enumclaw
- Maple Valley
- Normandy Park
- Pacific
- Snoqualmie

Of course, safety should always be the #1 concern if you are setting off your own fire works. Here are a few key suggestions on how to do this, courtesy of the King County Fire Marshall Services:

- Use only approved, legal, and common fireworks from reliable Washington State and King County Fire Marshal licensed retailers.
- Always have a responsible adult light all fireworks.
- Use fireworks under outdoor conditions only, away from buildings, houses with wood shingles, trees, and dry fields.
- Light one item at a time, move away quickly, and keep a safe distance away.
- Dispose of used fireworks by first soaking them in water.
- If a device does not light or fire, an adult should wait at least a minimum of five minutes before approaching the device.
- Remember, if it has a stick or fins and it goes up or if it blows up, it is illegal in Washington State.

Is Your Insurance Adjuster Trying to Act Like Your Doctor?

Think an Independent Medical Examination is actually “independent”? Think again.

Becoming a doctor is not easy. Medical practitioners have to spend a lot of time in school and in residency training to become qualified to treat people. Insurance adjustors, on the other hand, have zero training in the medical field, yet still sometimes feel qualified to say that your treatment is unnecessary.

Bring in the “Independent Medical Examination”

When insurance adjustors believe they should not be covering your medical expenses, they will bring in a doctor to agree with them. Their argument will focus on one of two things. They will either say that your injuries were not caused by the accident, or you are receiving unnecessary treatment.

To prove their point, the insurance companies will request that you be reviewed in an “independent medical examination.” This examination is conducted by a doctor that is paid a lot of money to side with the insurance company. Unfortunately, this is something you probably have to go through if the insurance company requests it.

The Independent Medical Examination can be a confusing process for many accident injury victims, which is why we wrote a short and easy to understand guide on how they work. You can get a copy of this for free by visiting: www.plg-llc.com/independent-medical-examinations.

You Have Questions—We Have Answers!

Question...

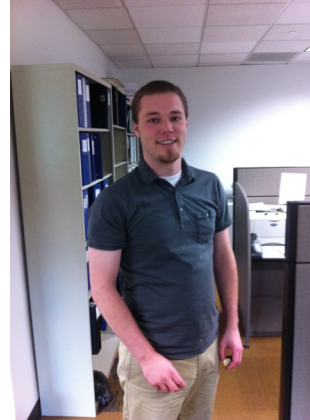
If a pedestrian is hit by a car outside of a crosswalk, is the driver of that vehicle still at-fault?

Answer...

The answer to this question is complicated, because it is very dependent on each individual situation. If the driver of the car was not paying attention (texting while driving, driving under the influence, etc) then the level of negligence is much higher than that of the pedestrian, even if they weren't in the crosswalk. But, if the driver was fully focused on driving and the pedestrian ran out across the street, the driver's negligence would be much lower. In this case, the driver's insurance company would fight tooth and nail to not pay damages to the pedestrian.

Premier Law Group Says Goodbye to Two Members of the PLG Team

Matt Newman (file clerk) and Scott Eisen (Marketing Director) will both be leaving Premier Law Group this month to head off to law school. Here is a little bit of info about each and their parting words as they begin a new chapter in their lives...



Matt Newman will be attending the University of Loyola at Chicago for law school. As the firm's file clerk for the last 7 months, Matt has brought an incredible work ethic to a position that has allowed the office to work in an incredibly organized and efficient manner. Here's what Matt had to say about his time here at Premier Law Group:

“My experience at Premier Law Group changed my perspective on what it means to be an attorney. The attorneys here always took the time to explain their views on what it means to practice law and advocate for their clients. I know the experiences I have had here will continue to serve me well as I transition to law school.”



Scott Eisen will be attending Boston University for law school. Working in Premier Law Group's marketing department for the last year, Scott has focused on developing new relationships in the community and staying in touch with former clients. Here's what Scott had to say about his time here at Premier Law Group:

“I doubt I will ever get to work again in an office that is as laid back as this one. The attorneys here work hard, but they certainly don't act like they are above anyone else in the office. I think that is a very rare trait amongst lawyers, and I hope to carry that same level of modesty after I graduate from law school.”

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FREE Legal Resource Guides



- *The Truth About Washington Auto Accidents*
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- *The Truth About Buying Washington Auto Insurance*
- *In Case of Death: Straight Talk on Washington Wrongful Death*

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Thanks For Your Referrals!

Readers of this newsletter have referred 28 clients to our firm since the start of 2010. Thank you so much, and please let us know if we can help you in the future!

Trivia Question of the Month

Who were the only two people that signed the Declaration of Independence and later served as U.S. President?

First person to email the correct answer to scott@plg-pllc.com will win a Jamba Juice gift card!!



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We Want to Feature YOU in Our Newsletter!

That's right, we want to recognize those of you that are doing amazing things in our next newsletter in a new feature called "Community Member Spotlight!"

If you, or someone you know deserves recognition for something they do, please let us know!

Email Scott at scott@plg-pllc.com with some background information and contact info to follow up on, and we'll write a feature article on this community hero for our next newsletter!



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This newsletter is intended to educate the general public about personal injury, medical malpractice, and small business issues. It is not intended to be legal advice.