

Aging in Place



As you have read in previous issues of Tualatin Life, this column's goal is to present information on various topics pertaining to the senior population in Tualatin. One of the concerns and particular interests of the Aging Task Force is safe sidewalks, intersections and streets to accommodate senior citizens, which in turn accommodates all residents of Tualatin. The following article, written by City Engineer Jeff Fuchs, appeared in the February issue of the City's monthly newsletter, Tualatin Today. It bears repeating:

“One of the great things about Tualatin is the network of sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and paths that provide pedestrians and bicycles with access to our homes, businesses and schools. The benefits are many, including the ability to get around town without a car; opportunities for exercise, which can improve your health and overall quality of life; and a safe environment for interacting with your neighbors.

But, safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities require a commitment by all roadway users to understand and obey the rules of the road and to be courteous to their fellow roadway users. Here is a very brief guide to some rules you should know and some of the actions you can take to keep our streets safe for everyone

Rule #1 – Every intersection is a legal crosswalk, even if there are no painted crosswalk stripes.

Rule #2 – Drivers and bicyclists must stop for pedestrians crossing the road in a crosswalk (see Rules #1 and #3).

Rule #3 – Crosswalks can also exist in between intersections (mid block) when marked with white painted crosswalk stripes.

Rule #4 – a pedestrian is crossing the roadway in a crosswalk when any part or extension of the pedestrian moves into the roadway in a crosswalk. This includes any part of the pedestrian's body, wheelchair, cane, crutch or bicycle.

Rule #5 – When turning on to a street, stop and remain stopped until the pedestrian has moved at least six feet beyond the lane you are turning into.

Rule #6 – When approaching a marked or unmarked crosswalk (see Rule #1 and #3), stop and remain stopped for pedestrians until they have cleared the lane you are traveling in and the lane next to you.”

Let's remember these rules when we are out and about, whether walking, bicycling or driving, and look out for each other.

On another topic, there is a website, www.safeelders.org, with information on how to stay safe and independent in your home. Please visit this website and watch the home safety video and print the free home safety checklist. It provides information we should all have.

If you have questions, concerns or would like more information on safe sidewalks and intersections, please contact me at susancnoack@hotmail.com. The Aging Task Force meets the second Monday of each month at 3:00 pm at the Juanita Pohl Center. You are welcome to join us any time.

Questions, comments or concerns, please email susancnoack@hotmail.com.