

## SPECIAL HAZARDS

### *Two-Wheelers, Joggers, the Disabled and Elderly*

Bicycles, motorcycles, wheelchairs, joggers and elderly pedestrians all require your special attention. When you're driving what you don't see might lead you to hurt somebody-or worse. To avoid accidents, understand what hazards are involved.

#### **Two-Wheelers: The Hazards**

Bicycles and cyclists are accident-prone. Several types of mishaps are likely to cause collisions:

- < Loss of control. Many things- a bump, loose gravel-can send cyclists tumbling or out of control.
- < Entanglement. Everything from loose clothing to debris on the street can get caught in the wheels and chains of cyclists, sometimes with disastrous effects.
- < Mechanical problems, Brakes fail, chains slip and motors stall.
- < Cyclist's failure. Many riders are recreational cyclists, lacking practice and traffic skills.

#### **Safe Responses**

Protect yourself by following this safety routine:

- < Follow cyclists at twice the distance you use to follow other vehicles.
- < When you change lanes, double-check your mirrors. Be watchful for motorcycles traveling on the stripe between lanes, a practice that is legal in some states.
- < When making a right turn, signal your intentions and slow down. Allow space for a cyclist to pass you.
- < Continue straight ahead, even if you're tempted to swerve. The cyclist can swerve more safely than you.
- < If a cyclist stops abruptly in your path, maximum braking power and steering control may be your only means of avoiding a collision.

#### **Special Pedestrians: Special Hazards**

You have to use caution whenever pedestrians are present. But some require special caution. Joggers frequently jaywalk. They also may leave the curb to pass other pedestrians.

Seniors tend to rely heavily on traffic lights,



Use your mirrors to check for pedestrians and cyclists.

signals and pedestrian right-of-way to ensure their safety. They pay more attention to the "Walk/Don't Walk" signal than to the speed and distance of approaching vehicles.

Disabled persons with hand or motor-powered wheelchairs pose many of the same hazards as cyclists or mopeds. They are hard to see. Often, they have inadequate brakes and can be difficult to control on rough surfaces. People in wheelchairs often are forced to travel in the road to reach a dip in the curb.

#### **Safe Responses**

Follow these steps to assure pedestrian safety:

1. Spot pedestrians in time to avoid collisions. Actively and continuously scan the street from curb to curb.
2. Just before making a right turn, look to the right for pedestrians entering the crosswalk from the curb.
3. Before making a left turn, look fully to the left for pedestrians who have entered the street.
4. Slow down and be prepared to stop when another vehicle is stopped at an intersection or crosswalk. It may have stopped to allow a pedestrian to cross.
5. Before backing out of a driveway, honk your horn to warn pedestrians.

#### **It's Your Concern**

While it's up to every bicyclist, jogger and pedestrian to look after his or her own safety, it's in your best interests to avoid accidents, regardless of who is to blame.