



Student Support News

No. 5

Tohoku University
Student Life Support Specialist Committee

Bicycle Accidents are on the Rise

More and more students commute to Tohoku University by bicycle, and from June of this year accidents involving bicycle commuters have increased sharply. The reported causes of accidents are going too fast, distracted cycling, cycling while drunk, and failure to stop at stoplights. Also, an increasing number of accidents involving international students have been reported, as well as accidents in which the cyclist was found to be at fault.(8 accidents in total have been reported; 1 in April/May and 7 in June/July including 4 accidents involving international students.)

As you may already know, failure to obey traffic laws while cycling carries various penalties. Some of these are described below.

| Type of Traffic Violation | Penalty |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Cycling while drunk | Up to 5 years in prison, or fine of up to JPY 1,000,000 |
| Failing to obey stoplights | Up to 3 months in prison, or fine of up to JPY 50,000 |
| Using mobile phones etc. | |
| Riding double | Fine of up to JPY 20,000 |
| Failing to use bicycle light at night | Fine of up to JPY 50,000 |

In the event that you injure someone while on your bicycle, you will be liable for damages to the injured person. In past cases, cyclists who have caused injuries have been sued for damages and ordered to pay tens of millions of yen. At Tohoku University too, student cyclists have been found at fault in accidents in the past, and in one case the accident was fatal to the victim. Always keep in mind that bicycles are considered vehicles under the law. Observe traffic laws strictly. Unfortunately, accidents can occur even if you observe all road rules carefully. Unlike automobiles, there is no compulsory liability insurance for bicycles. Therefore we strongly urge you to enroll in voluntary bicycle liability insurance.

Attention International Students:

Bicycles are a convenient method of transportation, but as your own country's traffic laws may differ from those of Japan, please use the QR code to learn about Japanese road rules. Protect yourself by observing these rules.

