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# SAFETY FIRST



The holiday season is a time for giving, celebrating, and spending time with loved ones, but it is also a time when safety deserves extra attention. From bicycles and e-bikes being given as gifts, to extra packaging and old electronics needing disposal, to the rise in gift card scams, small choices can make a big difference. This holiday edition of the Safety First newsletter shares helpful tips to protect your health, your home, your money, and your Town, so everyone can enjoy the season safely and with peace of mind.

## RIDE SAFE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON: BIKE AND E-BIKE SAFETY TIPS



Bicycles and e-bikes are popular gifts, especially during the holiday season. They offer fun, freedom, and a great way to get outside. However, riding safely is just as important as the gift itself, especially for new riders who may not be familiar with the rules or risks.

### Helmets Matter

Wearing a helmet is one of the most important safety steps for anyone riding a bicycle or e-bike. Helmets help protect the head during a crash, and head injuries are common in bicycle-related accidents. A helmet should fit properly, sit level on the head, and rest low on the forehead. It should not move or rock when worn. Riders of all ages are encouraged to wear a helmet every time they ride, and helmets should always be replaced after a crash, even if damage is not easy to see.

### E-Bike Safety

E-bikes require extra awareness because they can accelerate quickly and reach higher speeds than traditional bicycles. Riders should follow all traffic laws, ride predictably, and slow down early when stopping. Being alert to cars, pedestrians, and other cyclists helps prevent accidents. Visibility is also important, especially during shorter days and nighttime hours, so wearing bright or reflective clothing and using lights can help others see you more clearly.

### Battery Safety

Battery safety is another key part of e-bike ownership. E-bike batteries should only be charged using the manufacturer's charger and should never be charged overnight or while sleeping. Batteries should be kept away from beds, couches, and anything that can catch fire. If a battery overheats, leaks, smells strange, or changes shape, it should be stopped from use immediately. Safe charging habits help protect both people and homes.

Whether you are giving a bicycle, an e-bike, or safety equipment as a gift, taking time to learn and follow these safety tips can make every ride safer and more enjoyable. For more detailed guidance, including proper helmet fitting, e-bike laws, and battery fire prevention tips, readers are encouraged to review the safety flyers from Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles [[Bike Helmet Tips](#)] and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office [[E-Bike Safety](#)].

**The Power of a Helmet**

*Wearing a properly fitted helmet can reduce the risk of head injury in a bicycle crash by up to 85%.*

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## HOLIDAY RECYCLING AND SAFE DISPOSAL TIPS



The holiday season often brings more gifts, more packaging, and more old items being replaced. Knowing how to properly recycle and dispose of these materials helps protect our community, our environment, and our safety.

### Cardboard Items

Many holiday gift boxes, shipping boxes, and cardboard packaging can be recycled. In Palm Beach County, clean cardboard and totes should go into the yellow recycling bin. If boxes are too large to fit, residents may place extra cardboard beside the bin for collection or take it to a community cardboard dumpster or a Solid Waste Authority Home Chemical & Recycling Center. Removing plastic wrap, foam, and other non-recyclable materials before recycling helps keep the process safe and efficient.

### Electronics

The holidays are also a common time to replace old electronics like televisions, computers, phones, holiday lights, and other items with cords. These items should not be placed in the trash. Electronics and rechargeable batteries can be recycled safely at any of the Solid Waste Authority's Home Chemical & Recycling Centers. Proper disposal is important because damaged or improperly handled batteries can start fires in homes, garbage trucks, or waste facilities.

By recycling cardboard correctly and safely disposing of electronics and batteries, residents help reduce waste, prevent fires, and give materials a second life. For detailed guidance on what can be recycled, where to take oversized cardboard, and how to properly dispose of electronics and household hazardous waste, please review the resources provided by the Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County: [Cardboard Recycling](#) | [Electronics Recycling](#)

2025 Solid Waste Authority of PBC Holiday Four Rs 30s

Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County

[swa.org/electronics](https://swa.org/electronics)

**Keep Batteries and Electronics Out of the Trash**

*Improperly throwing away old electronics or rechargeable batteries can cause fires in garbage trucks or waste facilities. Recycling them at your local Solid Waste Authority center keeps your home and community safe.*

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## GIFT CARD SCAM ALERT: PROTECT YOURSELF THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Gift cards are a popular holiday gift, but scammers often use them to steal money. During the holiday season, it is important to slow down and check carefully before buying or sharing gift card information.

Before purchasing a gift card, always inspect the card and its packaging. Look for signs of tampering, such as damaged packaging, missing protective strips, or altered PIN areas. Be cautious of gift cards placed in low-visibility areas of a store, as scammers may replace real barcodes with fake ones. After purchasing a gift card, save your receipt and check the balance right away to make sure the card still has its full value. Buying gift cards online or directly from trusted retailers can also help reduce risk.

Scammers often pressure people to act quickly. Remember that legitimate businesses and government agencies will never ask for payment using gift cards. Never use gift cards to pay bills, fines, debts, or to send money to someone you do not know. If anyone asks you to send a photo of a gift card or share the card number and PIN, it is a scam.

If you believe you have been targeted or scammed, contact the gift card company right away and report the incident. You may also contact local law enforcement for assistance. Acting quickly can help limit losses.

For a full list of warning signs, safety tips, and gift card company contact information, residents are encouraged to review the Gift Card Scam Alert flyer provided by the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office: [Gift Card Scam Alert](#)

**Stop Gift Card Scams Before They Start**

*Scammers often replace barcodes or request payment with gift cards. Legitimate businesses will never ask for gift card payments, so always inspect cards carefully and buy only from trusted sources.*

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**Here's what you'll get when you follow us:**

- ✓ Timely updates on Town news and events
- ✓ Emergency alerts to keep you informed and prepared
- ✓ Helpful tips and resources for residents

Don't miss out! [Click here for more information](#) and follow us today!

**Social Media Delivers Fast Local Updates**

*Did you know social media helps local governments quickly reach residents with important news and emergency alerts? [FOLLOW US!](#)*

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[www.lakeparkflorida.gov](http://www.lakeparkflorida.gov)

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