Law Firm Rob Levine & Associates Releases Warning: "Dooring" - A Real Hazard To Cyclists

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Providence, Rhode Island law firm Rob Levine & Associates has released a blog post enumerating some of the hazards of road cycling. The blog post especially focuses on the dangers of ?dooring?, a type of accident that can occur when a cyclist rides alongside a line of cars and hits a car door that was left ajar or opened suddenly.

May is Bicycle Safety Month according to the U.S. Department of Transportation?s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). According to its statistics from 2012, 49,000 bicyclists were injured and 726 bicyclists were killed. Dooring is the third most common type of accident that occurs when riding a bicycle, accounting for roughly 20% of all bicycle accidents.

When a bicycle rider encounters a door left ajar or one that gets opened suddenly, they tend to swerve to avoid hitting the door and end up crashing into other potential hazards such as moving traffic. If the rider does not have enough time to correct their course, they can end up hitting the open car door at full speed. Either way, dooring can cause serious injury to both the bicycle rider as well as the owner of the car. It can also affect bystanders or other vehicles traveling on the road nearby.

The blog post cites Rhode Island law, Universal Citation RI Gen L § 31-21-14 (2012), which states that ?No person shall open the door of a motor vehicle on the roadways, streets, or highways of this state, available to moving traffic, unless and until it is reasonably safe to do so, and can be done without interfering with the movement of other traffic, including pedestrians and bicycles on sidewalks, shoulders, or bicycle lanes. No person shall leave a door open on the side of a vehicle available to moving traffic, including pedestrians and bicycles on sidewalks, shoulders or bicycle lanes, for a period of time longer than necessary to load or unload passengers.? Anyone found in violation of the above law can be fined $85 and if anyone was injured in the dooring accident due to negligence of the offending party, the victim may be entitled to compensation.

The article then gives tips to avoid dooring for both cyclists and vehicle riders. Adequate precaution from all parties can help in preventing dooring accidents as the onus lies on more than one side in most cases. For cyclists, the blog recommends being extra cautious when riding in an urban setting. If possible bicyclists should stay away from parked cars. They should keep an eye out for cars that appear to be occupied. They should make eye contact with the other people on the road and inside of parked cars. They should increase visibility by wearing the appropriate clothing, using reflectors, and turning on lights. They should also use the appropriate hand signs at all times to signal their intentions with adequate time to the other riders on the road.

For those sitting in parked cars, the blog recommends opening the car door using the Dutch Reach. It is a method that advises those exiting a vehicle to open the door with their far hand. So if the driver is exiting from the left side of the vehicle, they should use their right hand to open the door and vice versa. This makes it so that the body turns and makes it easy to look behind, seeing potential hazards before opening the car door.

For drivers who are worried about being in a dooring accident, the blog post recommends that they should be extra cautious when driving near cyclists in urban settings. If possible, drivers should give cyclists extra space when passing them. Drivers should respect everyone?s right to use the road and drive in such a way that they are sharing the road with cyclists.

Bicyclists and drivers who have been in a road accident can contact Rob Levine & Associates Personal Injury Lawyers to get the best representation for their case.

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For more information about Rob Levine & Associates Personal Injury Lawyers, contact the company here:Rob Levine & Associates Personal Injury LawyersDenis Dahlstead(401) 424-5241info@roblevine.com544 Douglas AveProvidence RI 02908

Rob Levine & Associates Personal Injury Lawyers

Providence, RI based Rob Levine & Associates Personal Injury Lawyers have been representing injury victims in Rhode Island for over 18 years. Rob Levine & Associates are a well loved part of the community with initiatives that benefit disadvantaged kids.

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