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**COUNTY BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES AT ALL TIME HIGH.
HEALTH DEPARTMENT AWARDED GRANT TO UP PREVENTION EFFORTS.**

OROVILLE, CA – As bicycle and pedestrian related fatalities continue to rise, The Butte County Health Department (BCHD) has been awarded a one-year “Bike and Pedestrian Safety” grant for \$29,000. The grant will fund activities to help promote bike/pedestrian safety in Butte County. This is the second grant awarded to BCHD’s Injury Prevention program this year.

Funding for the grant was provided by the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Butte County has seen an increase in both bike and pedestrian commuters since 2000. Since then, collision rates have increased countywide. In 2015, pedestrian fatalities in the county increased 55%. Data for 2016 and partial data for 2017 show a trend of increased fatalities for both bicycle riders and pedestrians.

“The data shows a direct need to address the increase of injuries and fatalities among our residents who bike or walk,” says Jodi Putnam, BCHD Health Education Specialist. “When the rules of the road are followed, the number of collisions goes down. More education is needed.”

The grant work will focus on injury and collision education and prevention geared to children, parents, caregivers, teachers, and community based organizations. Outreach events will include bike helmet fitting stations, bike rodeos, helmet diversion classes (for people cited by law enforcement), classroom presentations, proper use of equipment, and how to advocate for bike/pedestrian safety.

Bicycling and walking offers fun, freedom and exercise and it’s good for the environment. To learn more about the Butte County Office of Traffic Safety Program and to find bike and pedestrian events near you, visit the Butte County Public Health Pedestrian and Bike Safety page: <http://www.buttecounty.net/ph/Programs/InjuryPrevention/PedestrianBikeSafety>.

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