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Cyclists crashing West Vancouver's Ambleside Farmers Market

[Brent Richter](#) / North Shore News

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MARKET MARAUDERS Lyn Hainstock, market general manager for the Artisans Farmers Market Society, stands guard at the entrance to the Ambleside Farmers Market. A handful of road cyclists are putting market vendors and visitors at risk by riding through. photo Cindy Goodman

Organizers of the Ambleside Farmers Market want the marauding pelotons of MAMILs to stop crashing the barricade at the weekly Sunday market.

Most cyclists are happy to dismount and walk the 1500-block of Bellevue Avenue but there are a handful of road cyclists who flout the Road Closed signs and "come barreling through," said Lyn Hainstock, market manager.

Some Sundays are worse than others and this year has been much better than last year but there are still too many incidents, especially as the market's vendors are getting set up between the hours of 8 and 10 a.m.

"We've had some really near-accidents with children, with customers, with vendors and with animals," Hainstock said. "What we've been doing is saying 'Please, get off your bikes,' and they don't do it. We're all standing in front of them and they told us to 'F*** off, b****.' Charming right?"

Hainstock said when she tried to confront another cyclist, he responded "I pay taxes in West Van and I'll do what I damn well please," she said.

Hainstock said crashing the market doesn't make any sense when the cyclists could easily choose to detour to Argyle Avenue or Marine Drive instead.

"The only recourse we have is to go to the bylaw (officer) and ask them to come down and ticket, but I don't want to do that. I don't like that," she said. "But if they keep doing it, we're going to have to because we can't have people hurt."

Crashing the barricades and hurling abuse at the market staff is "totally unacceptable," said James Wilson, owner of Obsession Bikes in North Vancouver.

"As a representative of the cycling community, I find that reprehensible behaviour," he said. "What an incredibly selfish act — especially when there's loads of options to get through that area."

Barricades are put up for the safety of people inside the market as well as for the cyclists, themselves, he added.

Wilson suggested the district can help resolve the issue by changing their signs to include detour information. And, he said, it's also an opportunity for the district to review its bicycle paths in a big picture perspective.

"The current cycling route is a bit arduous. There's absolutely no flow to it," he said. "It jigs and jags. It goes up. It goes down. It seems to make no sense."

District of West Vancouver spokeswoman Donna Powers said staff will work on spreading the message that cyclists need to dismount if they want to pass through the market.

"If a cyclist chooses to ignore that, they're choosing to break the law," she said. "We are closing the road for a reason. The traffic and parking bylaw prohibits them. We expect cyclists and motorists to obey the posted law."

More than having their training interrupted, cyclists who get caught riding on the closed street can be given a \$45-fine, Powers said.

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