



EXPLORING EMPLOYMENT

GREEN Employment Program

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BICYCLE REPAIR

Article: Bike shops, mechanics see steady demand through winter

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Cyclists are trying to get a jump on spring tune-ups



Matt Ingriselli started operating a bike mechanic business out of his garage in April 2020. (Travis McEwan/CBC)

Mild winter weather has meant local bike shops missed their slow season this year — and sellers and mechanics are expecting to see another jump in business as cyclists try to beat the spring rush.

“Winter’s been probably one of the best winters ever. People have been coming in like crazy. They want to be active, they want to be outside,” said Michael MacFynn, the marketing and online manager for Revolution Cycle.

He said the store sold out of fat bikes in early December, and studded tires are also hot ticket items. He said indoor trainers have also sold out

every time more come into stock.

“We just can’t keep up with the demand. There’s not enough stock to supply everybody,” he said.

He said the mild weather and the closure of gyms under public health measures have probably contributed to ongoing interest. Looking ahead, he said last spring there was a bike shortage and they aren’t sure what to expect in the coming months in terms of stock availability.

“We’re basically telling people now, if you know what you want, buy it now. Pre-buy it now,” he said.

Matt Ingriselli worked as a gymnastics coach, but when that had to shut down when the pandemic started, he decided on a whim to start repairing bikes. The business, which he runs out of his garage, took off.

After a busy start last spring that saw his new bike mechanic business boom, he said he expected things to slow down over the winter. He said it did taper off for the Christmas holiday, but that didn’t last. He’s seen a giant spike in activity over the last few weeks.

“Because they learned about COVID the previous year, they want to get that booking in as soon as they possibly could, before having to wait two or three months to get it back,” he said.

“I’m just looking forward to a really busy year.”