

Study Session Handouts,
Related News, and Resource Materials
As Provided by Sponsoring Supervisors

RECENT ARTICLES ABOUT E-MICROMOBILITY ACCIDENTS

Car crash that killed young boy started when e-bike hit car

NBC Bay Area



By [Marianne Favro](#) • Published August 10, 2025



A family is mourning the loss of their 4-year-old son who was hit and killed by a car in Burlingame Friday night.

Police say someone on an e-bike hit a sedan before the car plowed into the young boy, killing him and injuring a 6-year-old girl.

There is a growing memorial of flowers and stuffed animals in front of the Truffle Poke Bar restaurant where the child was killed. Some who came to pay their respects say they are still in disbelief.

Burlingame police say a 19-year-old woman driving a white car was in a parking lot across the street when the car was hit by an e-bike. Police say the vehicle then accelerated forward across Donnelly Avenue into the restaurant, hitting the two children who were on the sidewalk.

Witnesses described a chaotic scene.

“People were screaming and running in to help out. I noticed there was a child on the ground, and people were scattered and screaming, ‘Help, help,’” said Nick Hatzidakis of Daly City.

The 4-year-old boy died, and the 6-year-old girl suffered non-life-threatening injuries and is recovering at Stanford Hospital.

On Sunday, people in the community dropped off candles and flowers at the site of the accident.

<https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/fatal-burlingame-crash-2/3931441/>

Police say the driver from San Mateo stayed at the scene and cooperated with investigators, and they do not suspect drugs or alcohol were a factor in the crash.

Some are wondering if this tragedy could have been prevented.

“It’s so sad, so I’m just devastated. It shouldn’t have happened, and I heard an e-bike was involved. Those e-bikes are out of control. They spook me all the time,” said Cathy Murray of Burlingame.

16-year-old dies in Half Moon Bay e-moto collision

E-motorcycle ran into box truck at Highway 1, Terrace Avenue intersection, Sheriff's Office says



By Holly Rusch, Daily Journal staff

Feb 11, 2026 Updated Feb 17, 2026



A 16-year-old died on an electric motorcycle in Half Moon Bay after running into a box truck at the intersection of Highway 1 and Terrace Avenue Feb. 9, a press release from the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office said.

An initial investigation found the 16-year-old was riding the e-motorcycle at high speeds on the Highway 1 shoulder before colliding with the truck at the intersection, the Feb. 10 press release said. Additional information about that collision, like whether the truck was stopped at the light, is still being investigated, Sheriff's Office Communications Director Gretchen Spiker said.

Deputies responded to the scene at 12:15 p.m. Monday, when the rider, who suffered serious injuries, was subsequently transferred to the hospital. The Sheriff's Office was notified he died at the hospital later that evening, the press release said.

The driver of the box truck is cooperating with the investigation, the press release said, and initial investigation found the driver to be properly licensed and that alcohol or drugs do not appear to be a contributing factor.

The Sheriff's Office Major Accident Investigation Team is conducting the investigation into the collision and is asking anyone with information to contact their office at (650) 363-4911.

The e-motorcycle involved did not have pedals and is classified as an off-highway motorcycle, according to the press release.

The 16-year-old did not have a license to operate an e-motorcycle, Spiker said in an email. “This is a truly tragic incident, and our thoughts are with the family, friends and loved ones of this young person,” Sheriff Ken Binder said in the press release. “Any time a young person loses their life it sends ripples through the community. This tragedy reminds us how dangerous e-motos can be. We urge parents and guardians to learn about the regulations surrounding the distinctions of these vehicles and to talk with kids and teens about safety and the rules of the road.”

Local officials have been emphasizing the dangers of motorized electric bikes and motorcycles in recent weeks and encouraging parents to educate themselves on the differences between various types of e-bikes and e-motorcycles when purchasing the devices for their children.

There are three classes of e-bikes. Class one and three e-bikes typically only have pedal assist and can go up to 20 mph and 28 mph, respectively. Class two e-bikes typically have pedals and throttle assist and legally go up to 20 mph.

Some electric vehicles sold with the throttle assist are classified as e-bikes but can go beyond 20 mph, making them more akin to e-motorcycles, experts have said. E-motorcycles, which typically lack pedals entirely and operate via throttle assist, have [motors that exceed 750 watts](#) and require a more stringent license and registration process.

It’s often e-motorcycles or similar vehicles, rather than standard e-bikes, that cause safety issues on the road, bike safety advocate Mike Swire said when asked to differentiate the contrast.

“Much of the danger that we see increasingly on our streets is related to e-motorcycles, not bikes,” he said. “We need to make sure that when we develop programs to address these dangers, we [note] bikes still can be a really good and safe solution to get more people out of cars and to help kids get safely to school.”



SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Public Information Officer - pio@smcgov.org
330 Bradford St., Redwood City, CA 94063
650-421-1243

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact for further information: Gretchen Spiker, Director of Communications, pio@smcgov.org

Feb. 10, 2026

San Mateo County Sheriff's Office Investigating Fatal Electric Motorcycle Collision

HALF MOON BAY, Calif. – The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office has learned that a 16-year-old involved in an electric motorcycle collision Monday afternoon in the City of Half Moon Bay has died.

At around 12:15 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 9, 2026, deputies responded to Highway 1 and Terrace Avenue for a report of a collision involving an electric motorcycle and a box truck.

Deputies arrived at the scene and rendered aid to the 16-year-old rider, who suffered serious injuries in the collision. Fire and EMS personnel arrived a short time later and transported the 16-year-old to an area hospital. Monday evening, the Sheriff's Office was notified that he later died at the hospital.

Preliminary information indicates the 16-year-old was riding the electric motorcycle at a high rate of speed on the shoulder of Highway 1, when it ran into a box truck at the intersection of Highway 1 and Terrace Avenue. The involved electric motorcycle did not have pedals and is classified as an electric off-highway motorcycle under Senate Bill 586 and CVC 436.1.

The driver of the box truck remained at the scene and is cooperating with the investigation. The initial investigation indicates the driver was properly licensed and alcohol or drugs do not appear to be a contributing factor.

Due to the severity of the collision, the Sheriff's Office Major Accident Investigation Team (MAIT) responded and is conducting a thorough investigation. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Sheriff's Office at 650-363-4911.

"This is a truly tragic incident, and our thoughts are with the family, friends and loved ones of this young person," said Sheriff Ken Binder. "Anytime a young person loses their life it sends ripples through the community. This tragedy reminds us how dangerous e-motos can be. We urge parents and guardians to learn about the regulations surrounding the distinctions of these vehicles and to talk with kids and teens about safety and the rules of the road."

For safety information and resources, visit <https://www.smcsheriff.com/bicycle-safety>.

Bike collision near Davis High School results in fatality

A 60-year-old nurse was killed in the collision, with the other rider sustaining injuries

 THE CALIFORNIA AGGIE

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

By CARLO FALLA — city@theaggie.org

March 13, 2026



A floral tribute and bike memorial marks the site on W. Covell Boulevard where cyclist Julie Veress died in a bike accident on March 2, 2026. (Sacha Chickering / Aggie)

On March 2, a fatal bicycle accident occurred on Covell Boulevard at 2:48 p.m., according to the [Davis Police Department](#). Julie Veress, a 60-year-old nurse, was killed in the collision and pronounced dead at the scene. Another victim of the incident, a 16-year-old boy, was sent to the hospital with minor injuries.

The crash occurred on a designated bike path near Davis High School. The boy, who was riding an electric bicycle, has been cooperative with investigators. The identity of the boy remains anonymous, given that he is a minor.

Lieutenant James MacNiven of the Davis Police Department [spoke to KCRA3](#) on March 3, explaining that the investigation is ongoing.

“At this point in the investigation, we don't know the context of the actions between the two parties that led up to this terrible and tragic incident,” MacNiven said.

Veress worked at the Sutter Davis Hospital as a registered surgery nurse. She was also a [mother of two and an avid biker](#) in the Davis community.

In a statement, Sutter Health spoke regarding the passing of Veress.

“We are heartbroken by the loss of a valued member of our team following a tragic incident in the Davis community,” [the statement reads](#).

Davis is often regarded as the [“Bicycle Capital of America.”](#) Around [50% of students](#) on campus utilize bikes to get around town and the university campus, with [12% of Davis adults](#) commuting by bike within the city. Despite the bike culture and infrastructure embedded in the streets of the city, [accident rates](#) have been shown to increase, with collision rates rising by 43% in 2022 compared to 2019.

The Davis Institute of Transportation Studies [conducted a study based on accident rates](#) in 2021. The study found that based on a projected population of e-bike users, 7.3% would be injured and admitted to the hospital on campus, while another 27% off campus would need to visit the emergency room with injuries, but not be admitted. The off-campus rate of e-bike collisions was significantly higher than the 12.9% for traditional bicycles.

Lieutenant John Evans of the Davis Police Department commented on bike safety protocols [in a web article](#).

“At this time we don’t have anything further to offer except that we ask everyone to keep themselves as safe as possible when riding their bikes, whether on the road or on bike paths,” Evans said. “Please wear your helmets, reflective clothing at night and when dark, follow the rules of the road and pay attention to what is going on around you.”

A memorial has been started on Covell Boulevard, where passersby can leave flowers and pay their respects in honor of Veress.

2 boys airlifted after Napa County crash involving e-motorbikes

San Francisco Chronicle

By [Aidin Vaziri](#), Staff Writer Updated March 11, 2026 11:55 a.m.



Emergency crews respond Tuesday evening to a crash on Newton Way in Angwin, where three juveniles were struck by a vehicle, according to Cal Fire. (Cal Fire LNU)

Three young boys were hospitalized Tuesday evening after a three-vehicle crash involving a car and two electric motorbikes in [Napa County](#), including a 5-year-old who suffered major injuries and was airlifted to a Sacramento hospital, authorities said.

The collision occurred around 6:15 p.m. at the intersection of Newton Way and Bay Street in Angwin, according to the California Highway Patrol.

Angwin is a small community in northern Napa County, about 60 miles north of San Francisco.

Investigators said a 5-year-old boy was riding an electric motorbike on Bay Street with a 7-year-old passenger, while another 7-year-old was riding a second electric motorbike alongside them.

Both bikes crashed into the right side of a 2023 Chevrolet Malibu sedan, CHP's Napa office said. Authorities noted that the intersection does not have stop signs.

The 5-year-old suffered major injuries and was flown by CHP helicopter to UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento, officials said. A 7-year-old was also airlifted to the same hospital with minor injuries.

The other 7-year-old was transported by ambulance to Queen of the Valley Medical Center in Napa with minor injuries, CHP said.

It was not immediately known whether the boys were wearing helmets at the time of the crash.

Authorities said neither alcohol nor drugs appeared to be factors in the collision, which remains under investigation.

Juvenile dies after electric bike crash in San Jose

The incident also left another juvenile injured.

NBC Bay Area



By [Victoria Meza](#) • Published March 20, 2026 • Updated on March 23, 2026 at 1:34 pm



A juvenile died and another one was hurt after an electric bicycle crash in San Jose Thursday afternoon, according to San Jose police.

Officers responded to the area of Remington Way and Allenwood Drive for a report of a solo electric bicycle crash just before 1:10 p.m., according to authorities.

The police department reported a juvenile male was riding a Magnum Cosmo electric bike and had a juvenile passenger. They were traveling north of Remington Way, passing through the intersection with Allenwood Drive, when police said the bike lost control and skidded to the ground.

The operator of the bike was taken to the hospital where he was pronounced dead, and the passenger was treated on scene for non-life-threatening injuries, authorities said.

Authorities identified the deceased juvenile as Khang Bui, 13, from San Jose.

According to police, this is the city's seventh traffic death of 2026.

<https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/juvenile-dies-e-bike-crash-sj/4055487/>

77-Year-Old Pedestrian Dies in SF After Being Struck By an Electric Scooter

KQED

[Samantha Lim](#)

Jul 23, 2025 Updated Aug 9, 2025



An e-scooter sits parked on a street corner in San Francisco on April 17, 2018. A pedestrian was crossing an intersection near Sixth and Market streets when a person on an electric scooter collided with him last week, San Francisco police reported. (Justin Sullivan/Getty Images)

An elderly man in downtown [San Francisco](#) was struck and killed by an electric scooter last week, San Francisco police said.

Officers on Friday afternoon responded to reports of a vehicle collision involving a pedestrian near Sixth and Market streets. The victim, 77, was crossing the intersection when a person on an electric scooter collided with him, SFPD reported.

The victim sustained life-threatening injuries and succumbed to his wounds after being transported to a local hospital by first responders, according to a statement by the police department. His identity has not been released.

“Our hearts break for the victim and his loved ones,” Marta Lindsey, a spokesperson for traffic safety advocacy group Walk San Francisco, said in a statement. “People walking in San Francisco shouldn’t have to worry about being hit by any type of vehicle, whether a car or an e-scooter.”

San Francisco police reported that the scooter driver stayed on the scene after officers arrived and cooperated with the investigation, adding that it does not appear that drugs or alcohol were involved in the collision.



Starting in March, speed cameras will be installed at different locations around San Francisco. Advocates hope it'll make San Francisco streets safer. (Beth LaBerge/KQED)

Lindsey said that vehicles like scooters and electric bicycles can pose a threat to people walking on the street because they can quickly accelerate to higher speeds, increasing the chances and severity of a possible crash.

Of the nine pedestrian deaths this year, seven of the victims were elderly, according to Walk SF.

The entirety of Market Street falls within the high injury network, streets with the highest concentration of traffic injuries and deaths. Since 2015, there have been more than 40 traffic collisions in the area of 6th and Market, Walk SF reported.

Recently, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency introduced new pedestrian and transit safety improvements in the area, such as updated traffic signals, repaved sidewalks and curb ramps.



California also passed a daylighting law last year, which prohibits drivers from parking within 20 feet of a crosswalk or 15 feet of a curb extension to create increased visibility on roadways. SFMTA has come under fire recently over what some advocates say is the city's noncompliance with the new law — painted curbs indicating where drivers are not allowed to park fall short of the mandated length.

Lindsey said the city can and should do more to protect those most vulnerable on city streets.

Vision Zero, a traffic safety policy that aims to reduce traffic and pedestrian casualties in San Francisco, expired in 2024 — the city’s deadliest year in at least two decades, with more than 40 crash-related deaths. Advocates have urged Mayor Daniel Lurie and other city officials to renew the policy or to introduce new strategies for maintaining public safety.

“We need streets to be designed and enforced to support safe behavior and protect our most vulnerable,” Lindsey said. “We can measure our city’s safety by how safe kids and seniors are. This tragedy shows how far San Francisco has to go with traffic safety and why it needs to be a priority for city leaders.”

The Shocking Crash That Led One County to Reckon With the Dangers of E-Bikes

Unregulated e-bikes are a growing danger on American streets. In one Bay Area town, a terrible accident finally led to reform.

By David Darlington

David Darlington is a lifelong cyclist who has received a National Magazine Award for public interest for a previous article on traffic laws and bike safety.

Nov. 30, 2025

In September 2023, Amelia Stafford was 15 and beginning her sophomore year at Terra Linda High School in eastern Marin County, Calif. An honor student who loved reading, played the trumpet, did well at science and aspired to work for NASA, Amelia often rode her bike to school. Both of her parents — Monica, who works for the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, and Scot, an Emmy-winning composer and a founder of the Pollen Music Group — have histories as cyclists: He grew up riding to school in San Francisco, and she commuted to her job on her bicycle across the Golden Gate Bridge. “It was very important to me that my kids grow up learning how to ride bikes,” Scot says.

“I wanted them to get exercise,” Monica adds, so Amelia’s bike didn’t have a motor. In the wake of the pandemic, electric bicycles were proliferating. Many of Amelia’s classmates had gotten e-bikes — or faster machines now known as e-motos — for birthdays and holidays. On a warm Saturday night after a football game, a group of kids was playing around with one.

Coral Billisi, Amelia’s best friend, recalls that Amelia got on the bike behind someone and rode up and down the street. She says it was such a short ride that wearing a helmet didn’t occur to anyone. When the bike toppled over, “our immediate reaction was that we all started laughing — we just thought it was so funny,” she says. “Like, Ha ha, they’re so stupid, they can’t even ride bikes.”

Then they saw the blood on the pavement around Amelia’s head.

Coral, who had taken a CPR course, called 911 and told the others not to touch Amelia. Then she ran to the Staffords’ house and banged on the door.

Monica had gone to bed early. She ran barefoot from the house. When she reached her daughter, Amelia’s eyes were open, but they had rolled back and blood was coming out

of her ears. E.M.T.s arrived soon after and transported her to MarinHealth Medical Center, where a CT scan showed bleeding between the skull and the brain.

When doctors removed the right side of Amelia's skull, they found that the damage to blood vessels surrounding her brain was worse than normal for such injuries, and that the resulting blood clot was leading to compression on the brainstem. With considerable difficulty, Blake Taylor, the neurosurgeon who operated on her, stopped the bleeding. The surgery lasted almost until dawn, when Amelia was loaded into a helicopter for transfer to a hospital in Oakland.



Amelia Stafford at home in Marin County, Calif., She lost her sophomore year at Terra Linda High School to a 2023 crash on an e-moto. Credit...Balazs Gardi for The New York Times

As he watched the helicopter take off, John Maa, a trauma surgeon on call that night at MarinHealth, was distraught. He had been fearing a case like Amelia's for years. As the only trauma facility in Marin County — which sits on the opposite side of the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco and features some of the region's most inviting open space, as well as an affluent and fitness-conscious population — MarinHealth has always seen a lot of injured bicyclists. But historically most of the injuries were minor: broken clavicles, wrists, ribs.

That changed in the summer of 2020, when Maa began noticing an increase in bicycle-related deaths. The first was a 72-year-old man who lost control of his bike on a

downhill grade and crashed into a guardrail; he broke his ribs in 20 places, punctured a lung, fractured a leg, broke a wrist, suffered a concussion and, after several months of going back and forth between the hospital and rehab, died of a stroke. More fatalities followed, including a 62-year-old pedestrian who was struck by a bicycle on a multiuse path. “When I heard that, I thought: That’s really strange,” Maa says. “I can’t remember a case of a pedestrian killed by a pedal bicycle.”

But the pedestrian hadn’t been killed by a “pedal” bicycle. Like the case of the 72-year-old, an e-bike was involved — a device that Maa says he had never heard of till then. “But as we moved from the summer of 2020 into 2021 and 2022, and we kept hearing it reported through the hospital and the media — another e-bike accident, another fatality — at some point I was like, Wait a minute, there’s something seriously wrong here.”

At the time, the county public health department didn’t distinguish e-bike crashes from those involving conventional bicycles. But MarinHealth maintains a database of trauma cases, so Maa — a soft-spoken 57-year-old surgeon who in his off hours has also waged battles against the tobacco and soda industries — began talking with the medical director of trauma services, Edward Alfrey, who, it turned out, was compiling numbers on injuries associated with e-bikes.

As the pandemic continued, the number of e-bike accidents increased. “You would expect that,” Alfrey says, “because sales were skyrocketing.” Indeed, in 2022, over a million e-bikes were sold in the United States, up from 287,000 in 2019, according to the Light Electric Vehicle Association. But what really struck Alfrey and Maa was that e-bike injuries were far more serious than those sustained on conventional bikes. Maa says they were more like what’s seen in motorcycle crashes. A pelvic fracture, for example, was uncommon on a pedal bicycle — only about 6 percent of conventional cycling injuries. For e-bike crashes, though, it was 25 percent.

The most alarming difference was the fatality rate. “On a pedal bike, the chance of dying from an injury is about three-tenths of 1 percent,” Alfrey says. On an e-bike, the data indicated, it was 11 percent.

These findings signaled what was unfolding around the country. During the same four-year period when nationwide sales quadrupled, e-bike injuries increased by a factor of 10, to 23,493 from 2,215, according to the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System. A study by the University of California, San Francisco, found that from 2017 to 2022, *head* injuries from e-bike accidents increased 49-fold.

As in Marin, casualties in other parts of the country included e-bike riders themselves and people they ran into. In 2023 in New York City, two pedestrians were killed by e-bikes, and 23 of 30 cycling fatalities were e-bike riders. In South Florida, a 66-year-old woman was killed by a 12-year-old boy on an e-bike, and a 54-year-old man riding a conventional bike died after being hit from behind by a 14-year-old on an e-moto. In Minnesota, a woman permanently lost her sense of taste and smell after being hit on a sidewalk by an e-bike. In San Diego County, the towns of Carlsbad and Encinitas

announced public emergencies after a woman and a teenage boy were killed on e-bikes, and in Los Angeles, a 12-year-old girl died after crashing on the back of an e-bike.

By the time the helicopter carrying Amelia Stafford was banking away to the east, Maa was out of patience. “All of the serious injuries prior to that were in older patients,” he says. “This was a young person.”

After the aircraft was out of sight, he called Mary Sackett, a member of the Marin County Board of Supervisors. “The day that we were dreading has come,” he told Sackett. “One of your young constituents is very seriously injured, and her outcome is unknown. This has changed everything. You have to do something.”



Unsettled by the severity of injuries from e-bike accidents, John Maa, a trauma surgeon at MarinHealth Medical Center, had already been talking to officials about the problem when he treated Stafford's injuries. Credit...Balazs Gardi for The New York Times

The argument for e-bikes is a compelling one: Because they're so easy and fun to ride, they inspire more people to bike instead of drive, with far-reaching environmental, economic and health-related benefits. A 2020 study of Portland, Ore., indicated that if one out of every seven automobile trips was instead made by e-bike — according to the Department of Energy, half of all vehicle trips go less than three miles from home, a distance easily traversed by bikes — carbon emissions could drop by 12 percent. Bloomberg New Energy Finance calculates that e-bikes are already cutting worldwide demand for oil by a million barrels per day, or four times as much as all the world's electric cars. And because e-bikes cost only a fraction as much as automobiles, while

also significantly reducing the costs associated with parking, fuel and maintenance, they are now seen by many as the key element of the micromobility movement, defined by low-speed, human- and electric-powered transportation.

But to achieve this kind of broad societal benefit, e-bikes are likely to need greater regulatory oversight. The government's effectively hands-off approach dates to the turn of the 21st century, when Lee Iacocca, the former Ford and Chrysler executive, founded E.V. Global Motors, whose flagship product, the E-Bike, may have coined the term. That product didn't succeed, but in 2002 it helped bring about H.R. 727, which provided for the regulation of "low-speed electric bicycles" under the Consumer Product Safety Act. It also set the maximum speed for such bikes at under 20 miles per hour — a rate that, while fast by conventional bicycling standards, crucially placed it under the purview of the Consumer Product Safety Commission rather than the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which would have subjected it to the same laws as motor vehicles. As a result, e-bike regulations are similar to those for conventional bicycles, meaning, among many other things, that operating one doesn't require a driver's license.

As e-bikes have become more sophisticated — lightweight lithium-ion batteries have replaced heavy, lead-acid ones, and computerized motors now provide variable levels of assistance — numerous efforts have been made to classify them. Forty-six states have adopted some version of a three-tiered system of e-bike categories that was established a decade ago by PeopleForBikes, a trade and advocacy organization based in Boulder, Colo. In Class 1, the bike's motor assists the rider up to a speed of 20 m.p.h., but only when a rider is pedaling. Class 2 has the same top speed but also has a hand-operated throttle, similar to a motorcycle's, that can be used in lieu of pedaling. Class 3 is like Class 1, but its maximum assisted speed is 28 m.p.h. (The federal limit of 20 m.p.h. applies to the speed generated solely by a motor; speeds can exceed that in combination with human pedaling.) As a rule, Class 1 bikes are permitted wherever a conventional bicycle can go (including bike lanes and trails), while Classes 2 and 3 are restricted to streets and roads (in theory if not in practice).

"Class 1 is very similar to the definition of an electric bike in Europe," says Matt Moore, the policy counsel at PeopleForBikes. "The other two types are generally not allowed there — they're treated as mopeds," which require a license, registration and insurance. E-bike motors in the European Union are usually limited to a maximum speed of 15.5 m.p.h. — a pace seldom exceeded by casual conventional cyclists.

E-bikes have now become so popular that old-fashioned, human-powered ones are tagged as "analog" or "acoustic" bikes. The extra boost of energy they provide feels like magic — a perpetual tailwind, a helpful nudge at your back. Without any training or education, however, people accustomed to analog bicycles can be unprepared for the power, acceleration and speed of e-bikes — not to mention their weight, which typically exceeds 50 pounds, or roughly twice that of conventional bikes. Hence the similarity to motorcycle injuries, thanks to increased momentum and the greater harm from impacts when they get out of control.



E-bike riders in Greenbrae, Calif. Under a 2002 federal law, the machines are regulated like regular bicycles, rather than as motor vehicles. Local laws around their use vary widely. Credit...Balazs Gardi for The New York Times

Since e-bikes were legally defined as distinct from motor vehicles in 2002, apparently only one additional federal law — allowing their use on federally funded trails that don't permit motor vehicles — has regulated them further. Individual cities and counties, however, have enacted a crazy quilt of local rules. Some states are now considering mandatory licensing, registration and insurance for e-bikes. When Nashville commissioned a public survey in 2022 on the issue of allowing e-bikes on the city's greenways, there were 2,700 responses. Class 1 pedal-assist e-bikes got 54 percent approval; Class 2 hand-throttle bikes got 40 percent. Universities including Yale, Fordham and some California state schools have banned e-bikes from their campuses. Following the death of the 66-year-old woman in Florida, the village of Key Biscayne outlawed e-bikes altogether. After a deadly collision between an e-bike and a pedestrian, a Boston city councilman proposed legislation banning mopeds and e-bikes for food delivery.

Such a law would constitute the nuclear option in New York City, where food delivery represents ground zero in the e-bike explosion. During the pandemic, when services like DoorDash and Grubhub mushroomed in popularity, delivery workers embraced e-bikes to keep up with demand. At the same time, Citi Bike, New York's bike-share program, expanded the electric options in its rental fleet. The resulting swarm of fast machines — frequently driven in lawbreaking ways — gave rise to a grass-roots nonprofit group called the NYC E-Vehicle Safety Alliance. With more than 1,000 members (including 100 self-identified victims), its demands include the licensing of e-bikes — the goal of a proposed “Priscilla's Law,” named for a 69-year-old educator who was killed by a rented e-bike that ran a red light — the confiscation of e-bikes that violate traffic laws and their prohibition from public parks.

Mayor Eric Adams has responded by imposing an e-bike speed limit of 15 m.p.h., but because so many delivery workers are immigrants, the issue has taken on sociopolitical overtones. Not wanting to criminalize or deprive the underprivileged of “good employment opportunities,” Ben Furnas, the executive director of the nonprofit bicycle-advocacy group Transportation Alternatives, recommends prohibiting the sale of Class 3 e-bikes. He adds that he would also like to see “much more regulation of the delivery-app ecosystem, so that it doesn’t pressure workers into breaking the rules to hit their targets” — a position shared by Zohran Mamdani, the mayor-elect.

In Marin, in response to the casualties there, the Marin Healthcare District board of directors passed a resolution in December 2022: “Requesting State and Local Governments to Study Further Measures to Safely Regulate Electric Bikes.” When that generated no response, Maa, who is not on the board, reached out to public officials, who surprised him, he says, by reporting that the county coroner had no record of any e-bike deaths at all. This turned out to be a labeling issue: Maa might have known that a patient had died from e-bike injuries, but by the time that was recorded by the coroner, cause of death could be “accident.”

Marin officials needed hard numbers to effect a change in public policy. In part because of this difficulty with the data, the county seemed to be making little progress. But then, Maa says, Amelia Stafford crashed, and everything changed: “It was like a light switch.”



A replica of Stafford’s skull, and the implant required after her surgeries, on her family’s piano. Credit...Balazs Gardi for The New York Times

Following her surgery in September 2023, Amelia was placed in a medically induced coma. After a week, she was taken off the drugs, at which point her parents, Scot and Monica, expected her state to be “somewhere between stupor and vegetative.” On the day her breathing tube was removed, they say they were told that, if she was going to be able to speak again, it might happen by that evening. They went out for a walk, leaving Scot’s brother by Amelia’s bedside.

“All of a sudden,” Scot remembers, “we got a text saying: ‘She’s talking. *A lot.*”

Over the next several days, Amelia slowly regained some mobility. A bacterial infection in her brain resulted in two more high-risk surgeries, but by November, she was allowed to return home — wearing a helmet when not in bed — and in late February, her skull was restored with a replica of its missing fragment. Gradually her speech, vision, hearing and memory returned to near normal, along with her ability to read and write. Monica describes this outcome as “more amazing than we can express.”

Talking about her crash today, Amelia calls the term e-bike “a play on words.” If the machines were called motorbikes, she believes, they would be far less popular. “But the fact that it’s called an e-bike” — evoking such everyday stuff as email, e-books or (less salubriously) e-cigarettes — “makes it accessible.”

Her friend Coral concurs. “People don’t think about them as mini-motorcycles, which is really what they are,” she says. “People think of them as ‘bikes plus’ — just, like, a little extra. It’s really geared toward younger people who don’t have an understanding of the impacts.”

Bikes have always offered independence to kids — and liberated parents from ferrying them around — but the fun factor offered by e-bikes mixes dangerously with young people’s proclivity for play, made worse because they are often not old enough to drive and don’t know the rules of the road. The Marin chapter of Safe Routes to School, a national organization that encourages kids to walk and bicycle, has been teaching e-bike safety since 2022 (and Marin has also introduced an online E-Bikers Club to educate kids about rules and etiquette). But Matt Willis, a former public health director for Marin County, says he heard complaints that kids were “ignoring stop signs, weaving in and out of traffic, riding double and doing wheelies down the middle of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard,” which is Marin’s main thoroughfare. There were, he adds, “reports of pedestrians being knocked over by e-bike ‘gangs.’”



“People don’t think about them as mini-motorcycles, which is really what they are,” says Coral Billisi, Stafford’s best friend. Credit...Balazs Gardi for The New York Times

Even some of the county’s biggest e-bike boosters began to understand that something was out of order. One such person was Bob Mittelstaedt, a retired trial lawyer who bicycles several days a week on Marin’s Mount Tamalpais, the reputed birthplace of mountain biking. Until a few years ago, he pedaled an analog bike, but as he approached his 70s, he felt increasingly “limited” — riding shorter and shorter distances over the same routes every day. Then a friend started regaling him with stories about how far he could ride on his e-bike. “So I took his for a test ride and never looked back,” he says.

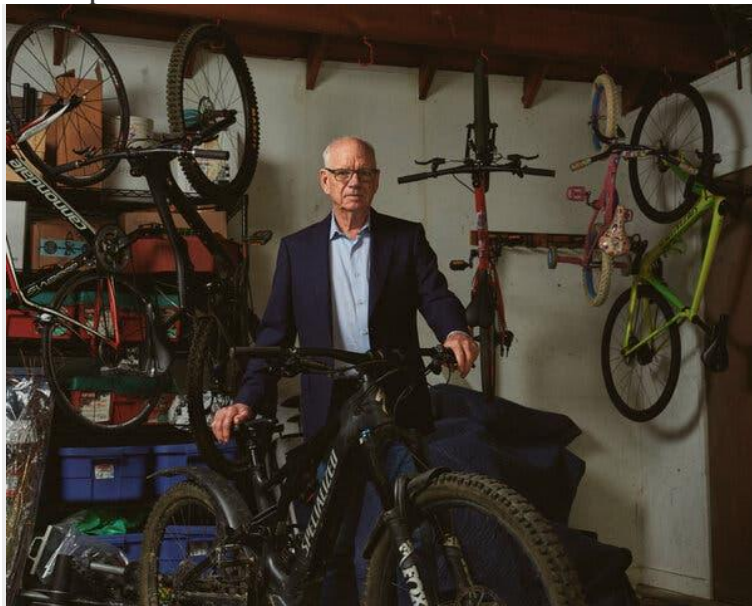
Mittelstaedt, now a lean and energetic 77, and some fellow senior cyclists formed a nonprofit organization called E-Bike Access to advocate electric mountain bikes on Mount Tam. Mittelstaedt says that many of the arguments against e-mountain bikes are the same ones originally used against conventional bicycles: that they cause erosion and scare wildlife and hikers. “But then they’ll usually say: ‘E-bikes are even worse. And even if you just allow the legitimate Class 1 ones, the next wave is going to be kids on their throttle devices.’”

By “throttle devices,” he is referring to Class 2 machines, which have captured an estimated two-thirds of the e-bike market. According to PeopleForBikes, the rationale in 2015 for creating a class for bikes with throttles — which can eliminate even the modest

exercise benefits of pedal assistance — was that many e-bikes already had them, and the trade organization didn't want to exclude those products and companies.

But to Mittelstaedt and others, it's inappropriate to consider these vehicles to be "bikes" at all. "The essence of bicycling is pedaling," Mittelstaedt says. "A machine propelled by a motorcycle throttle just shouldn't be considered a bicycle. It can go from zero to 20 faster than a regular bike without any exertion at all."

As a volunteer for Safe Routes to School, Mittelstaedt inventoried the classes and brands of bicycles and e-bikes at 12 local campuses in Marin County. He found that while a majority were conventional bikes, among electric devices those with throttles were by far the most popular — and that most of them had motors capable of going faster than 20 m.p.h.



"We all want to get kids out of cars and onto bikes," says Bob Mittelstaedt, who works to encourage bicycle use by students in Marin. "The manufacturers took advantage of that." Credit... Balazs Gardi for The New York Times

To conform with federal law, Class 2 e-bikes have "speed controllers" that keep users under the limit. But these can be circumvented by magnets, dongles, third-party apps, "tuning kits," wire clippers or even software provided by the manufacturer — unlocking modifications popularly called "jailbreaking." "You do it by pushing a button or two or entering a code on the display," Mittelstaedt says. "It's as easy as changing a setting on your iPhone."

By most accounts, the company that led this movement was Super73, an Orange County-based "American lifestyle adventure brand" founded in 2016. With retro styling, a bench seat and formidable 4-inch-wide tires, its product looked like a mini-motorcycle, and it attracted endorsements from the likes of Will Smith, Paris Hilton and Madonna. "Others, like Sur-Ron," a Chinese manufacturer, "were straight-up dirt bikes that don't fit the regulations at all," says Brett Thurber, an owner of a three-store Bay

Area e-bike business called the New Wheel. “But kids were asking their parents to buy them because they look cool and go really fast.”

Some manufacturers — but not governments — have taken it upon themselves to call such machines “Class 4” e-bikes. Others refer to them as “out-of-class electric vehicles”; bicycle-advocacy groups, which want to avoid being associated with these machines, prefer “e-motos.” In any case, they aren’t bicycles, nor are they street legal without registration and a license, yet they still show up regularly on roads and bike paths. One online influencer called Sur Ronster, who also has a retail business called Ronster Rides, posts videos of bands of teenagers, dozens strong, outdoing one another’s daredevil feats at breakneck speed on city streets and highways.

“We all want to get kids out of cars and onto bikes,” Mittelstaedt says. “The manufacturers took advantage of that. If the limit is 20 miles an hour, kids will want to go 21; if the limit is 21, they’ll want to go 22. In the old days, when you had loud, gas-powered, smelly mopeds, everybody knew what they were.” Today, because the vehicles are electric and quiet, it’s hard for the police to detect when they’ve crossed the line separating e-bike from moped or motorcycle.

Some schools in Marin County now prohibit such e-motos from parking on school property. On a weekday afternoon last spring, Mittelstaedt toured a few campuses to see how any restrictions were working. “We’ll just pull in here, and you can see how effective the enforcement is,” he said, approaching Tamalpais High School in Mill Valley (where he coaches a mock-trial team). The school has cages for kids to lock their bikes during the day, but several Super73s were parked beside them. “Because these are banned, they’re not allowed inside the cage. So they just park them outside the cage. Very effective.” A few blocks down the road, at a water-treatment plant adjacent to Mill Valley Middle School, several e-motos were locked to railings in the parking lot, with more at a nearby community center.

As the end of the school day approached, idling cars and S.U.V.s formed a line leading into the entrance of the middle school. “This is what we’re up against — cars clogging up traffic, waiting to pick up their kids,” Mittelstaedt said. “But it’s a false dichotomy to suggest that the choice is either an electric device or parents bringing them in to school. It could be a regular bicycle — or it could be a *legal* e-bike.”



Some schools in Marin County ban e-motos from school property; students just park their vehicles elsewhere. Credit...Balazs Gardi for The New York Times

When school was done, kids streamed out of the building. Some got on conventional bikes; others mounted electric devices and sped out onto the bike path where a pedestrian was struck and fatally injured by an e-bike in 2022. “You can see how they’re releasing their energy,” Mittelstaedt said. “They’re pent up all day in school, you know, probably not really enjoying most of the topics; they can’t wait to get out, and then they get on their bikes, popping wheelies, going 30 miles an hour. They’re the big guns on campus now — it’s just a great high for them.”

At a third stop, Redwood High School in nearby Larkspur, several machines — Jasion, Lectric, Ride1Up — were locked to trees, poles and fences across from the school. Other e-motos — Movcan, Ridstar, Hovsco, Ariel Rider — were brazenly attached to bike racks in front of the administration office. “Ariel Rider is the fastest bike you see on these campuses,” Mittelstaedt said. “They have advertised a top speed over 38 and a motor of 1,000 watts. This one has no class label, so it’s illegal for anyone to ride.” (A spokesman for Ariel Rider says that it no longer makes and sells such a model and that “all models are shipped with compliant speed settings,” as well as the proper classification and safety labels.)

Amelia was on an e-moto when she crashed. Coincidentally, in the course of his volunteer work before her accident, Mittelstaedt made the acquaintance of Amelia’s

mother, who was working for a public service organization on Mount Tamalpais. At one point, the two of them staffed a mobile van that provided information about the mountain to visitors.

When Amelia's injury became public, Mittelstaedt regretted not having acted more quickly in his assessment of throttle bikes. "If I had been more forceful — if I had known more, if I had done the research on how dangerous these bikes are and said something to Monica at the time — maybe life would have turned out differently for Amelia."

After Amelia's crash, Marin County applied what Mary Sackett, who would go on to become president of the county board in January of this year, calls a "full-court press." She convened a meeting on e-bike safety with Maa; Alfrey; Willis; Damon Connolly, Marin's state assemblyman; and representatives from law enforcement, education and Safe Routes to School. Willis, who had been working with E.M.S. on a system to track e-bike accidents, finally began compiling numbers collected by ambulance crews, which soon showed that the rate of e-bike-related accidents was nine times higher for youths than for riders over age 20. (The rate for 10-to-15-year-olds was five times greater than for any other group.) The county proceeded to issue a public health advisory recommending that riders not use e-bikes with throttles, and in January 2024 Connolly introduced California Assembly Bill 1778, to prohibit anyone younger than 16 from riding a Class 2 e-bike and to require anyone using those bikes to wear a helmet.

The proposed legislation had the potential to set national precedents. Amid the hodgepodge of e-bike laws established locally throughout the United States, most states have an age limit of 16 for Class 3, but none for Classes 1 or 2; in those states that have placed restrictions on these classes, the age varies from 14 to 16, but no laws at the time mandated limits specifically for Class 2.



Students near Redwood High School in Marin. "They can't wait to get out," Mittelstaedt says, "and then they get on their bikes, popping wheelies, going 30 miles an hour." Credit...Balazs Gardi for The New York Times

The bill encountered resistance from bicycle advocates loath to stigmatize the machines or discourage people from getting out of cars. A group called Streets for All opposed the legislation, citing “an unfair marketplace for consumers who have invested in thousand-dollar e-bikes for their children”; “potential for selective and uneven enforcement”; “decreasing the number of cyclists on the road, thereby making those remaining less safe”; and “increasing teenagers’ (who are historically the worst driving demographic by age) reliance on cars and therefore worsening the already high rate of vehicle collisions in California.”

Neither the Marin County Bicycle Coalition nor the California Bicycle Coalition (CalBike) took a position on the bill, though CalBike’s policy director, Jared Sanchez, asked on the organization’s website: “In a state where 4,000 people die annually and many more are injured due to traffic violence, some California cities are freaking out because teenagers on e-bikes ... did a wheelie?”

Cycling-advocacy organizations generally subscribe to the view advanced by Ben Furnas of Transportation Alternatives. The focus, he says, should be “on the vehicles that are killing and maiming the most people: heavy cars and trucks.” Instead of increased regulation of e-bikes, the solution should be infrastructure that allows “safe places for everyone” — specifically, protected bicycle lanes wide enough for both slower and faster bikes. The most egregious examples of the latter — out-of-class e-motos — are what e-bike supporters argue should be the target for policing, not unmodified Class 2 bikes.

“For a hundred years, we just had cars and pedestrians,” says Asha Weinstein Agrawal, the lead author of a forthcoming paper on e-bike safety and policy options in California for the Mineta Transportation Institute at San Jose State University. “Motorcycles were regulated like cars, but Americans treat bicycles as toys.” In other words, bikes were an afterthought, not carefully integrated into the designs and rules of our roads — which Agrawal says is “much more of a problem now that we have electric bicycles on the road as well.” While she agrees that it would be good to get people to switch from gas vehicles to e-bikes, she says “it doesn’t make sense to have an ever-growing number of different categories with separate rules.” She has found that most people don’t understand the three-class system. “Not surprisingly,” she adds, “people are unlikely to follow rules they don’t understand.”

The most consequential resistance to California Assembly Bill 1778 came from the State Assembly’s transportation committee, whose principal consultant concluded that Marin’s injury data wasn’t sufficiently persuasive to justify a statewide law. As a result, the bill was eventually amended to a voluntary four-year pilot program, only in Marin County, with a requirement to report enforcement data by Jan. 1, 2028. It still had to make its way through the State Senate, however — a challenge for which the star witness was Amelia Stafford.

In May 2024, John Maa, who had been following both Amelia’s progress and that of A.B. 1778, asked the Staffords if she could testify before the State Legislature. At first they said no, believing that Amelia had already been through a sufficient ordeal. “But when

she heard about the opportunity, she surprised us,” Monica says. “She said she wanted to do it.”

On the Tuesday after Memorial Day, Amelia traveled to Sacramento with her family and her friend Coral. After thanking “five teams at five hospitals” for enabling her to be there, she told the Senate’s transportation committee that her accident showed how devastating a fall from a Class 2 e-bike can be.

“To a teenager,” she said, “these bikes seem like normal bikes. Twenty miles per hour doesn’t faze us. It doesn’t sound fast or dangerous. But the reality is far different.” Echoing the findings by Maa, Alfrey and other surgeons around the country, she testified that falls from e-bikes are more like violent falls from motorcycles. “Because of what I’ve learned,” she said, “I’m here to speak out to protect teenagers like me.”

The bill passed the Legislature in late August. On Sept. 27, days before the year’s deadline for enacting new laws, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a bill that requires e-bike batteries to be certified by an accredited testing laboratory; the following day, he signed a bill resembling Marin’s, establishing a voluntary pilot program in San Diego County but restricting e-bike ridership to age 12 or older for both Class 1 and Class 2 machines. Then, on Sept. 29, Newsom, who has a house in Marin, showed up at the Staffords’ for an impromptu signing ceremony.



Stafford with her mother, Monica. Last year she testified before the California State Legislature in favor of a bill that imposed helmet and age rules on riders of Class 2 e-bikes. Credit...Balazs Gardi for The New York Times

“I saw two signature lines, and I thought one of them was for me,” Amelia says. “I reached for his pen, and he very politely took it away from me. It was one of the most humiliating things in my life.”

Amelia’s life would seem to warrant the opposite of embarrassment. After missing her sophomore year of high school, she returned in the fall of 2024 and is now a senior planning to go to college. She volunteers as a peer mentor at Kaiser Foundation Rehabilitation Center in Vallejo, Calif., and she and Coral started a First Responders Club at Terra Linda High School, teaching students how to react in an emergency. The seizures she has as a result of her injury, together with the rest of her experiences over the past two years, have altered her future plans. Instead of hoping to work for NASA, she now wants to study neuroscience.

Two more California laws now prohibit the sale of apps that modify e-bikes to increase their speed beyond the legal limit, as well as the sale of devices that enable such modification. As a result, Super73’s website now states that customers who downloaded the Super73 app after Jan. 1, 2025, would not be able to modify its bikes beyond the Class 2 mode in which they’re sold. But a customer-service representative for the company acknowledged by email that “the motor itself is capable of higher speeds in other configurations.”

The Marin law went into effect at varying points around the county this summer and, after grace periods, jurisdictions have begun enforcing it — but only after riders have been stopped for another infraction, like running a red light. The police are not supposed to stop anyone based on appearance (for example, their apparent age). Moreover, during a recent municipal meeting, one officer explained that when they try to pull juveniles over, the kids often flee, evading pursuing police cars via narrow trails and sidewalks. But he also noted that in one case, at least, the parents of a child who was injured while riding an e-moto were cited for allowing an unlicensed juvenile to operate a motorcycle.

In any case, the new law doesn’t seem to have diminished enthusiasm for what in some cases are illegal bikes. This September, at Redwood High School, where Mittelstaedt counted 31 e-motos in April 2024, he now counted 48.

***A correction was made on
Dec. 2, 2025***

An earlier version of this article misstated John Maa’s role at MarinHealth Medical Center. He is a trauma surgeon, not the chief trauma surgeon.



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
TODD SPITZER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Date: March 3, 2026
Case # 26NF0820

Kimberly Edds
Director of Public Affairs
Office: 714-347-8405, Cell: 714-504-1917
media@ocdapa.org

Ryan Railsback
Public Information and Affairs Administrator
Office: 714-347-8435, Cell: 657-966-4863
media@ocdapa.org

**Yorba Linda Father Charged with Felony Child Endangerment and Abuse,
Contributing to Delinquency of a Minor after 12-Year-old Son was Critically
Injured while Illegally Riding E-motorcycle He Helped his Son Modify**

***Father previously attended Orange County Sheriff's Department's E-Bike Seminar with his
Two Sons, 10 and 12, After Older Son's E-motorcycle was Impounded because the Boy was
Riding It without Being Properly Licensed; Children under 16 years old are legally prohibited
from riding E-motorcycles***

SANTA ANA, Calif. – A Yorba Linda father has been charged with felony child endangerment and abuse and misdemeanor contributing to the delinquency of a minor after his 12-year-old son was critically injured after he ran a red light and was hit by a car while illegally riding an E-motorcycle which he and his father had unlawfully modified. The boy was given the E-motorcycle as a Christmas present and had already had his e-Motorcycle impounded once before the July 2025 collision that left him with a fractured skull, an intercranial bleed and several other broken bones.

Richard John Eysallenne, 39, of Yorba Linda, pleaded not guilty today to one felony count of felony child endangerment and abuse and one misdemeanor count of contributing to the delinquency of a minor. He faces a maximum sentence of six years in state prison if convicted on all counts.

“E-motorcycles are not child’s play, and we are not playing around in Orange County when it comes to the safety of our children,” said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. “There is absolutely no reason that an unlicensed, untrained child with no concept of the rules of the road should be riding a motorcycle that can go up to 60 miles per hour next to cars on a public street and think that by some miracle they are going to be safe. This 12-year-old boy is lucky to be alive and the driver who hit him will have to live with that horror of seriously injuring a child through no fault of his own. The Orange County District Attorney’s Office isn’t letting parents off with a warning. Let me make it clear: Parents who buy their child an E-motorcycle and let them ride them illegally or help modify eBikes to transform them into E-motorcycles are handing their children a loaded weapon – and those parents are going to be prosecuted.”

On Sunday, July 20, 2025, around 2 p.m., Orange County Sheriff's deputies were called to the intersection of Via Lomas De Yorba West and La Palma Avenue in the city of Yorba Linda regarding an accident involving a rider who had run a red light and was hit by a Honda Civic driving eastbound on La Palma.

A vehicle driving behind the Honda Civic captured the collision as the Civic attempted to avoid the bicyclist which had run the red light and drove into oncoming traffic. The rider, who was later identified as a 12-year-old boy, suffered a concussion, an intercranial bleed, skull fracture, a broken wrist, and a fractured femur.

The 12-year-old boy, his 10-year-old brother, and the boys' father attended an E-Bike Safety Presentation hosted by the Yorba Linda Police Services on January 15, 2025, after the 12-year-old received a citation in December 2024 for illegally riding an E-motorcycle. Riders of Class 3 E-motorcycles must be 16 years of age and possess a motorcycle license.

A law enforcement inspection of the 2024 Talaria XXX the 12-year-old was riding when he was hit and critically injured did not qualify as an e-bike and instead the bike was classified as a motor-driven cycle under CVC section 405 or a motorcycle under CVC section 400. Both classifications require a valid motorcycle license for street operation, as well as DMV registration, license plate, insurance and full motorcycle equipment. Without complying with these requirements, the only approved use on this E-motorcycle is either on private property or properly registered as Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) areas.

The inspection revealed that the 2024 Talaria XXX:

- had been modified to replace its manufacture pedals with motorcycle pegs – and did not have “fully operable pedals” and its motor power exceeded the maximum of 750 watts, as required by the electric bicycle statute. (CVC section 312.5(a) and (b).) This bike's motor was rated 750 watts, with peak output of 5,000 watts.
- The manufacturer-installed governor which limited the maximum speed to 20 miles per hour had its speed limiter wire cut and had been rerouted to a key switch, allowing the operator of the bike to disable the speed limiting mechanism. Bypassing the 20 miles per hour speed limiter can allow riders attain speeds of up to 60 miles per hour with its 5,000 watts motor.

California law distinguishes between e-bikes and E-motorcycles based on three main features: the power limit of its motor, its maximum speed limit, and whether it is equipped with operable pedals. Electric bicycles with Class 1 or Class 2 designations do not have rider age or licensing restrictions; e-bikes with Class 3 designations require riders to be aged 16 or older.

Generally, an electric bike that does not qualify as Class 1, 2 or 3, will be classified as an electric motorcycle. That means either that the bike has an electric motor that exceeds 750 watts of power or can reach speeds higher than 20-mph on motor power alone. Additionally, if the bike is *not* equipped with fully operable pedals, or if it has been modified to reach speeds higher than 20-mph or to attain power higher than 750 watts, the bike cannot be designated an electric bike, and instead would be considered an E-motorcycle.

“Our deputies have seen firsthand the serious injuries that can occur when E-motorcycles are operated unsafely,” said Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Don Barnes. “Parents play a critical role in keeping their children safe. Our goal is not punishment, but prevention. We want families to understand that unsafe modifications and reckless riding can have serious consequences.”

Senior Deputy District Attorney Noor Hasan of the Family Protection Unit is prosecuting this case.

###

Their son was injured in a violent e-moto crash. Now they've been charged with child abuse

S.F. Chronicle | By [Rachel Swan](#), Staff Writer

March 26, 2026



Bay Area parents were charged with child abuse after their teen was injured after crashing an e-moto, like the ones shown.
Rachel Swan / S.F. Chronicle

Prosecutors in Contra Costa County have charged a Benicia mother and father with child abuse, following a violent crash in which their son rammed an [e-moto](#) into a minivan.

The case reflects [a broader movement](#) among law enforcement and politicians to crack down on the electric micromobility devices, which are often advertised as e-bikes, but can achieve faster speeds up to 60 or 70 miles per hour. Unlike e-bikes, these electric motorcycles often feature peg footrests instead of pedals, so that riders operate them merely with a throttle, and many come with age and license requirements.

When officers responded to the collision on the afternoon of Sept. 18, 2025, they found a boy with severe injuries at Treat Boulevard and Arkell Road in Walnut Creek, near De La

[Teen's violent e-moto crash led to abuse charges against his parents](#)

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/emoto-crash-child-abuse-22154371.php>

Salle High School. The teen had been riding a Surron Light Bee e-moto without a license, in what police described as a reckless manner at “unsafe speeds.”

Shortly after 3 p.m. he he smashed into the back quarter panel of a van that was making a left-hand turn, emerging with injuries that required hospital treatment. The van driver was not hurt and remained at the scene during the investigation.

His father, Steven Leroy Crews, and mother Jeanna Marie Gabellini, both 58, will each face one misdemeanor count for repeatedly allowing their child to ride the e-moto from age 14 to 17, despite citations and admonitions from law enforcement. Officials at the Contra Costa District Attorney’s Office have not identified the teen.

Acknowledging that e-bikes, which can also be modified to achieve faster speeds, and e-motos have proliferated on city streets, District Attorney Diana Becton said in a statement that parents “must understand the dangers these vehicles pose to children if operated unlawfully and without proper driver education.”

Fear and anxiety have intensified in recent months over fast e-bikes and e-motos that are marketed to teens, some of whom have struck and killed people or fallen and suffered acute trauma. Earlier this month, a 16-year-old rider on an e-bike [struck and killed](#) a 60-year-old nurse in Davis.

Soon thereafter, a couple in Burlingame sued [an 11-year-old e-bike rider](#) who hit a van that killed their 4-year-old son in a chain-reaction crash last summer.

Becton is not the first DA to file child abuse charges against parents over an e-moto wreck. Weeks ago, the Orange County District Attorney with felony child endangerment and abuse after his 12-year-old suffered a skull injury while riding one of the vehicles. According to prosecutors, the father had given his son the 2024 Talaria XXX for Christmas, and then helped modify it.

More reading: [How illegal ‘e-moto’ riding became a dangerous Bay Area teen status symbol](#)

California mother charged after teen son hits 81-year-old while riding e-motorcycle

14-year-old allegedly struck the elderly man while he was 'doing wheelies,' authorities said.



Eyewitness News

Wednesday, April 22, 2026 5:18PM

ALISO VIEJO, Calif. -- A California mother is facing felony charges after her 14-year-old son crashed into an 81-year-old man while riding an electric motorcycle, authorities said.

Tommi Jo Mejer, 50, was arrested by the Orange County Sheriff's Department on Tuesday at the Lamoreaux Justice Center in Orange.

According to the Orange County District Attorney's Office, the incident happened last month in Lake Forest, California. Mejer's son allegedly struck the elderly man while he was "doing wheelies," authorities said.

The victim - a substitute teacher and Vietnam veteran - remains hospitalized in critical condition.



joyanne goodfellow/ GoFundMe.com

"Parents who buy their child an E-motorcycle and let them ride them illegally or help modify e-Bikes to transform them into E-motorcycles are handing their children a loaded weapon - and those parents are going to be prosecuted. That is not a threat. That is a promise," Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer said in a press release. "This 81-year-old man survived flying combat missions in Vietnam protecting freedom and now he is clinging to life because a mother refused to parent her child and he was run over in the street by a

vehicle that should have never been on the road. There is absolutely no reason that an unlicensed, untrained child with no concept of the rules of the road should be riding a motorcycle that can go up to nearly 60 miles per hour next to cars on a public street and think that by some miracle they are going to be safe. The state Legislature has made it virtually impossible for prosecutors to hold juveniles accountable for committing serious crimes, and the only way to stop the carnage E-Bikes and E-motorcycles are causing across Orange County is to hold parents accountable for the crimes they allow their children to commit."

The district attorney's office said Mejer had previously been warned about the dangers of electric motorcycles.

"During a 28-minute interaction with two Orange County Sheriff's deputies captured on body worn camera, Mejer admitted that she purchased her son a Surrón E-motorcycle and knew that he drove it recklessly," the district attorney's office said. "The deputies warned her that she could face potential criminal charges if she continued to allow him to ride the E-motorcycle which he could not legally ride."

Riders of Class 3 electric bikes must be 16 and have a valid motorcycle license.

Mejer has been charged with one felony count of child endangerment, one felony count of accessory after the fact to a crime, one misdemeanor count of contributing to the delinquency of a minor, one misdemeanor count of loaning a motor vehicle to an unlicensed driver and one misdemeanor count of providing false information to a peace officer.

If convicted, she faces a maximum sentence of six years and eight months in state prison.

CALIFORNIA CONSUMER ALERT



Subscribe to Our Newsletter

Subscribe



ROB BONTA

Attorney General

Too Fast, Too Furious: Attorney General Bonta, California District Attorneys Issue Consumer Alert on E-Bike Safety, Legal Requirements

Press Release / *Too Fast, Too Furious: Attorney General Bonta, California Di...*

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Contact: (916) 210-6000, agressoffice@doj.ca.gov

If it's too fast, it's not an e-bike — you might be riding illegally

OAKLAND — California Attorney General Rob Bonta, together with Marin County District Attorney Lori Frugoli, San Francisco District Attorney Brooke Jenkins, and San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe today issued a consumer alert to remind manufacturers, retailers, consumers, and parents that California has important safety laws regarding the sale and use of electric bicycles, also known as e-bikes. Two-wheeled vehicles that go over 28 miles per hour with pedal assistance or 20 miles per hour with throttle assistance are not e-bikes — under California law, they are mopeds or motorcycles and require additional licensing and age requirements to operate and

sell. **Importantly, modifying an e-bike to exceed the speed or power limits mentioned above is dangerous, may transform the e-bike into a motorcycle or moped under California law, and may be a crime if riders do not have appropriate licenses.**

“Sometimes, what looks like an e-bike or is marketed as an e-bike is not a bike at all. We are seeing a surge of safety incidents on our sidewalks, parks, and streets. Bike riders and parents: If your or your teen's electric two-wheeled vehicle goes too fast, it might be a motorcycle or a moped — not an e-bike,” **said Attorney General Rob Bonta.** “To ride a motorcycle or moped, you need to have the appropriate driver’s license and comply with rules of the road. With the popularity of e-bikes booming, I highly encourage manufacturers, retailers, and especially parents to review the consumer alert today and ensure they and their kids are complying with California law.”

“I’m proud of the actions Marin’s community leaders, schools, and cities have already taken to improve e-bike safety,” **said Marin County District Attorney Lori Frugoli.** “But to keep everyone safe while enjoying our shared streets, trails, and open spaces, we must make sure that products marketed and sold as e-bikes are truly legitimate e-bikes — not electric motorcycles.”

“Electric bicycles can be an economical, enjoyable, and convenient way to get around,” **said San Francisco District Attorney Brooke Jenkins.** “Unfortunately, many retailers are marketing and selling two-wheeled vehicles as ‘e-bikes’ when they do not qualify as electric bicycles in California. Consumers, and especially parents of teenage children, should carefully check that the product they want to purchase legally qualifies as an electric bicycle. If not, it may actually be a motorcycle (or motorcycle equivalent), which requires a license, registration and insurance. This is a matter of both consumer protection and public safety.”

“Legally operated e-bikes can be a fun and environmentally friendly transportation option,” **said San Mateo District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.** “However, San Mateo County has seen many illegal motorcycles and mopeds which are marketed and sold as e-bikes. The safety of our communities requires manufacturers, sellers, and buyers, including parents, to know and comply with California’s e-bike laws.”

All About E-Bikes:

Bicycles, including e-bikes, are part of California’s commitment to alternative forms of transportation that reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

E-bikes are bicycles equipped with an electric motor that provide power assistance while pedaling, with some models featuring a throttle which can allow riders to power their e-bike without pedaling. They make cycling faster, easier, and more accessible by reducing effort. E-bikes can expand access to California’s roads, open spaces, and trails, offer transportation options to riders with reduced mobility, and are less expensive to purchase and maintain than cars.

However, because of their higher speeds, e-bikes can pose a dangerous risk, especially if they are modified to go faster, transforming them into motorcycles or mopeds. A study by the University of California, San Francisco found that rider injuries from e-bikes nearly doubled each year from 2017 to 2022, and a University of California, San Diego study showed injuries in San Diego among e-bike riders under 18 soared by 300% from 2019 to 2023.

E-bikes fall into three classifications:

- **Class 1**, also known as low-speed pedal-assisted e-bikes, provide assistance only while being pedaled and only at speeds under 20 miles an hour.

- **Class 2**, also known as low-speed throttle-assisted e-bikes, provide power assistance up to 20 mph but have a throttle that allows the rider to engage the motor without pedaling.
- **Class 3**, also known as speed pedal-assisted electric bicycles, are like Class 1 bicycles except that the motor assistance must stop when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour.

All e-bikes sold in California must have a permanent label that discloses the bike's classification number, identifies the e-bike's top assisted speed and the wattage of its motor.

While people of all ages may ride Class 1 or Class 2 e-bikes, Class 3 e-bikes may only be ridden by people who are 16 years old or older and who are wearing helmets. Cities, counties, and other local governments including schools and parks districts may have additional rules and ordinances regarding where and how e-bikes can be ridden.

NOT all two-wheeled vehicles with electric motors are considered e-bikes under California law. If a two-wheeled vehicle with an electric motor has any of the features mentioned below, it may require registration with the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and proper licensing:

- Provides pedal assistance beyond 28 miles per hour;
- Provides throttle assistance beyond 20 miles per hour;
- Has a motor with more than 750 watts of power; or
- Does not have operable pedals.

For Retailers:

Sellers may only advertise or sell vehicles as “e-bikes” if they fall within one of the three classes listed above. Sellers must also not advertise or sell as “e-bikes” vehicles that are intended to be modified to exceed applicable limits. Misrepresenting the characteristics of a bicycle or other vehicle, converting one for illegal use, or selling one without the required DMV occupational licenses is a crime. The DMV has specific requirements for dealer and salesperson licensing.

For Parents:

Attorney General Bonta and the District Attorneys encourage all parents to carefully ensure any bicycle or e-bike that they are purchasing for their children is safe and legal for their children to ride. Children under 16 may only ride Class 1 or Class 2 e-bikes. Class 3 e-bikes may only be ridden by people who are 16 years old or older and who are wearing helmets.

If a vehicle does not qualify as an e-bike, because it lacks pedals or exceeds the power or speed thresholds mentioned above, it may be considered a motorcycle or moped under California law. In that event, the owner or operator must observe all requirements that pertain to those vehicles, including possession of an M1 or M2 operator’s license, adequate insurance, and registration with the DMV.

Parents should also be aware that some school districts have rules regarding bicycles, including rules that restrict unsafe and overpowered bicycles from campus grounds. Modifying an e-bike to exceed the speed or power limits mentioned above is dangerous, may transform the e-bike into a motorcycle or moped under California law, and may be a crime if riders lack the appropriate DMV licenses (available only to people 16 years old or older).

#

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

ELECTRIC BICYCLE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

21201 CVC

- ✓ Equip the bicycle with a light that illuminates the road ahead. This light must be visible for 300 feet in both directions ahead and to the sides of the bicycle.
- ✓ Install a red reflector on the rear of the bicycle, which must be visible from a distance of 500 feet.
- ✓ Add a white or yellow reflector to each pedal so they are visible from both the front and rear of the bicycle at a distance of 200 feet.
- ✓ Bicycles must have a white or yellow reflector on each side at the front and a white or red reflector on each side at the rear.



GENERAL E-BIKE SAFETY TIPS

- ✓ **Share the Road:** Be aware of cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles. Practice courtesy by maintaining space and signaling.
- ✓ **Group Riding:** Keep a safe distance and use hand signals or verbal cues to indicate changes in direction or speed. Always maintain a single file and keep to the right on most roadways.
- ✓ **Helmet Use:** Always wear a properly fitted helmet, regardless of age or bike type.
- ✓ **Parking and Locking:** Use a lock to secure your e-bike when unattended to prevent theft.
- ✓ **Watch for Pedestrians:** Slow down and give pedestrians the right of way on shared paths.
- ✓ **Ride in the Right Lane:** Travel in the same direction as traffic and avoid riding on sidewalks where it's not allowed.
- ✓ **Be Predictable:** Signal your intentions with hand signals and avoid sudden movements.
- ✓ **Be Visible:** Use lights and reflective accessories when riding in low-light conditions, especially at night.




SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



330 Bradford Street
Redwood City, CA 94063

If you have any questions:

 (650) 363-4911



www.smcsheriff.com/bicycle-safety



SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



ELECTRIC BICYCLE SAFETY

E-BIKE CLASSIFICATIONS

312.5 CVC

An “electric bicycle” is a bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts.

A Class 1 bicycle is a “low-speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle” equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to assist when a speed of 20 mph is reached.

A Class 2 bicycle is a “low-speed throttle-assisted electric bicycle” equipped with a motor used exclusively to propel the bike and ceases to assist when a speed of 20 mph is reached.

A Class 3 bicycle is a “speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle” equipped with a speedometer and a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to assist when a speed of 28 mph is reached.

CLASS 1



CLASS 2



CLASS 3

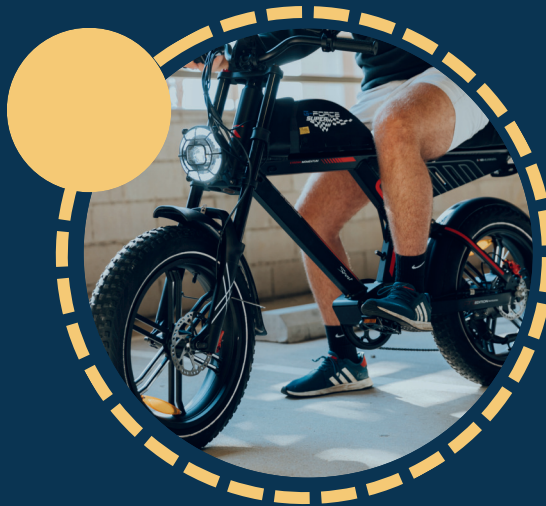


It is essential to familiarize oneself with the specific rules and regulations pertaining to your e-bike class. A thorough understanding of these guidelines will facilitate compliance with local laws and promote safe riding practices.

E-BIKE CLASSIFICATION COMPARISON



	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Throttle	No	Yes	No
Pedal Assist	Yes	Yes	Yes
Max Speed	20 mph	20 mph	28 mph
Min Age	No Min.	No Min.	16
Helmet Requirement	Under 18	Under 18	All Ages
Allowed on Sidewalk	No	No	No
Allowed on Bike Path	Yes	Yes	No



WHY YOU MIGHT GET AN E-BIKE CITATION

Equipment Violations:

- Riding at night without proper lights or reflectors.

Moving Violations:

- Failing to obey traffic signals.
- Yielding incorrectly.
- Riding against the flow of traffic.

Class-Specific Rules:

- Operating a Class 3 e-bike if you are underage or not wearing a helmet.

Sidewalk Riding:

- Riding an e-bike on a sidewalk where it is prohibited.
- Riding any e-bike on a sidewalk at an unsafe speed.

Location Restrictions:

- Riding an e-bike in areas where motorized vehicles are prohibited, such as certain public parks or trails.

HOW TO AVOID AN E-BIKE CITATION

Understand Your E-Bike Class:

- Determine whether your e-bike is classified as Class 1, Class 2, or Class 3, as different regulations apply to each category.

Follow All Traffic Laws:

- Adhere to speed limits, traffic signals, and right-of-way rules, just as you would on a traditional bicycle.

Check Local Ordinances:

- Always look for posted signs or consult local municipal codes, as local regulations may differ and take precedence over state laws.

Be Aware of Age and Helmet Laws:

- Ensure that you meet the minimum age requirements for your specific e-bike class, and always wear a helmet if it is required by law.

Educate Yourself:

- Utilize resources from local authorities or organizations to learn more about the safe and legal operation of e-bikes.



SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE E-BICYCLE/MOTORCYCLE ENFORCEMENT GUIDE



CVC 312.5(a)(1)/(2)

Equipped with an electric motor and pedal assisted (Class 1) and/or throttle assisted (Class 2), reaches the speed of **20 miles per hour**.

MOVING

- CVC 21200.5** DUI Alcohol/Drugs on Bicycle (M)
- CVC 21202(a)** Right half of Roadway
- CVC 21203** Hitching rides on vehicles
- CVC 21204(b)** Passenger must be seat on permanent seat/Passenger under 4 yrs/40 lbs must be seated away from moving parts
- CVC 21205** Carrying articles, not holding handlebars
- CVC 21211(b)** Impede/Block others on bicycle trail/path
- CVC 21212(a)** Under 18 must wear helmet
- CVC 21456.2(a)** Failure to obey traffic control signs
- CVC 21650.1** Travel same direction of vehicles (on roadway)
- CVC 22110(a)/(b)/(c)** Failure to use hand and arm signals

EQUIPMENT

- CVC 21201(a)** Wheel brake required
- CVC 21201(b)** Handlebar height not higher than shoulders
- CVC 21201(c)** Operator able to reach ground
- CVC 21201(d)(1-4)** Lights/reflectors during darkness
- CVC 21204(a)** Must have permanent seat attached
- CVC 24016(d)** Modify/Tamper to increase speed



CVC 312.5(a)(3)

Equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of **28 miles per hour** and equipped with a speedometer.

MOVING

- CVC 21200.5** DUI Alcohol/Drugs on Bicycle (M)
- CVC 21201(c)** Operator able to reach the ground
- CVC 21202(a)** Right half of Roadway
- CVC 21203** Hitching rides on vehicles
- CVC 21204(b)** Passenger must be seat on permanent seat/Passenger under 4 yrs/40 lbs must be seated away from moving parts
- CVC 21205** Carrying articles, not holding handlebars
- CVC 21207.5** Riding on bicycle trail/path/lane, hiking/equestrian/recreation trail
- CVC 21211(b)** Impede/Block others on bicycle trail/path
- CVC 21213(a)** Under 16 year old operating
- CVC 21213(b)** No helmet (Any Age)
- CVC 21456.2(a)** Failure to obey traffic control signs
- CVC 21650.1** Travel same direction of vehicles (on roadway)
- CVC 22110(a)/(b)/(c)** Failure to use hand and arm signals

EQUIPMENT

- CVC 21201(a)** Wheel brake required
- CVC 21201(b)** Handlebar height not higher than shoulders
- CVC 21201(d)(1-4)** Lights/reflectors during darkness
- CVC 21204(a)** Must have permanent seat attached
- CVC 24016(d)** Modify/Tamper to increase speed



CVC 406(a)

Two-wheeled or three-wheeled device having fully operative pedals for propulsion by human power or having no pedals if powered solely by electrical energy, and an automatic transmission and a motor that produces less than 4 gross brake horsepower and can propel the device at a **maximum speed of not more than 30 miles per hour**.

MOVING

- CVC 21200.5** DUI Alcohol/Drugs on Bicycle (M)
- CVC 14601.1(a)** Suspended Driver
- CVC 12500(a)** Unlicensed Driver
- CVC 12500(b)** M1 or M2 Endorsement Required (M)
- CVC 23127** Unauthorized. Vehicle on trail/path (M)
- CVC 27803(b)** Driver DOT Helmet Required
- CVC 27803(c)** Passenger DOT Helmet Required

EQUIPMENT

- CVC 5030** Special License Plate Required
- CVC 5037(a)** License Plate attached
- CVC 5200(b)** Rear Plate required
- CVC 24600(a)** Tail lamp required
- CVC 24603(a)** Brake light required
- CVC 24607(a)** Rear Red Reflector required
- CVC 25650.5** Lighted Headlamp as engine runs
- CVC 26311(a)** Brakes required both wheels
- CVC 26709(a)** One Rearview Mirror required
- CVC 27000(a)** Horn required
- CVC 27465(b)(1)** Bald Tires
- CVC 4000(a)** Registration required
- CVC 16028(a)** Proof of Insurance



CVC 407.5(a)

Two-wheeled device that has handlebars, has either a floorboard that is designed to be stood upon when riding or a seat and footrests in place of the floor board, and is powered by an electric motor. This device may also be designed to be powered by human propulsion.

MOVING

- CVC 212221.5** DUI Alcohol/Drugs (M)
- CVC 21228** Must ride on right side of roadway
- CVC 21229(a)** Must ride in bicycle lane
- CVC 21229(b)** Unsafe movement out of bicycle lane
- CVC 21235(b)** Shall NOT ride on HWY posted higher than 25 MPH unless in Bicycle Lane
- CVC 21235(c)** Helmet required (Under 18)
- CVC 21235(d)** Must have valid DL or Instruction Permit
- CVC 21235(e)** No passengers
- CVC 21235(f)** Carrying load preventing at least one hand on handlebar
- CVC 21235(g)** Riding on sidewalk prohibited
- CVC 21235(h)** Handlebars above shoulders on HWY
- CVC 21235(i)** Leave o side blocking sidewalk/pathway
- CVC 21235(j)** Ride while attached to a vehicle
- CVC 22411** Shall NOT exceed 15 MPH (Max Speed)

EQUIPMENT

- CVC 21235(a)** Must have a mechanical break
- CVC 21223(a)(1)** Front light during darkness visible 300'
- CVC 21223(a)(2)** Rear red reflector visible 500'
- CVC 21223(a)(3)** Side reflector white or yellow visible 200'
- CVC 21226(b)** Adequate muffler/Excessive noise
- CVC 21226(d)** Modified exhaust system

*Property - CANNOT BE TOWED/IMPOUNDED

*Property - CANNOT BE TOWED/IMPOUNDED

VEHICLE - May be TOWED OR IMPOUNDED

*Property - CANNOT BE TOWED/IMPOUNDED



SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE E-BICYCLE/MOTORCYCLE ENFORCEMENT GUIDE



CVC 400(a)/(b)

Motor vehicles have a seat or saddle for the use of the rider, designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground. A motor vehicle that has four wheels in contact with the ground, two of which are a functional part of the sidecar, is a motorcycle if the vehicle otherwise comes with the definition of subdivision (a).

MOVING

- CVC 23152(a)-(h)** DUI Alcohol/Drugs (M)
- CVC 23127** Unauthorized vehicle on trail/path
- CVC 12500(a)** Unlicensed Driver (M)
- CVC 12500(b)** M1 or M2 Endorsement Required (M1 not required for a 3 wheel)
- CVC 14601.1(a)** Suspended Driver (M)
- CVC 27803(b)** Driver DOT Helmet required (Unless fully enclosed)
- CVC 27803(c)** Passenger DOT Helmet required (Unless fully enclosed)

EQUIPMENT

- CVC 5200(b)** Rear Plate Required
- CVC 5201(a)** License Plate clearly visible/Secure/Horizontal/12" from ground/Rear mounted
- CVC 24012** Turn signal 9" apart rear/16" apart front
- CVC 24953(a)** Turn signal forward/rear facing
- CVC 24600(a)** Tail Lamp required
- CVC 24600(f)** Tall Lamp min 15" from ground
- CVC 24601** License Plate light required, must be white
- CVC 24603(a)** Brake Light required
- CVC 24603(c)** Brake Light min 15" from ground
- CVC 24607(a)** Rear Red Reflector required
- CVC 24650.5** Lighted Headlamp as engine runs
- CVC 26311(a)** Brakes required both wheels
- CVC 26709(a)** One rearview mirror required
- CVC 27000(a)** Horn required
- CVC 27150(a)** Muffler required
- CVC 27155** Tank Cap Required
- CVC 27465(b)(1)** Bald Tires
- CVC 4000(a)** Registration required
- CVC 16028(a)** Proof of Insurance

VEHICLE - May be TOWED OR IMPOUNDED



CVC 405

Any motorcycle with a motor that displaces less than 150 cubic centimeters.

MOVING

- CVC 23152(a)-(g)** DUI Alcohol/Drugs (M)
- CVC 23127** Unauthorized vehicle on trail/path
- CVC 12500(a)** Unlicensed Driver (M)
- CVC 12500(b)** M1 Endorsement Required (M)
- CVC 14601.1(a)** Suspended Driver (M)
- CVC 27803(b)** Driver DOT Helmet required
- CVC 27803(c)** Passenger DOT Helmet required

EQUIPMENT

- CVC 24600(a)** Tail Lamp required
- CVC 24600(f)** Tall Lamp min 15" from ground
- CVC 24601** License Plate light required, must be white
- CVC 24603(a)** Brake Light required
- CVC 24603(c)** Brake Light min 15" from ground
- CVC 24607(a)** Rear Red Reflector required
- CVC 24650.5** Lighted Headlamp as engine runs
- CVC 26311(a)** Brakes required both wheels
- CVC 26709(a)** One rearview mirror required
- CVC 27000(a)** Horn required
- CVC 27150(a)** Muffler required
- CVC 27155** Tank Cap Required
- CVC 27465(b)(1)** Bald Tires
- CVC 4000(a)** Registration required
- CVC 16028(a)** Proof of Insurance

VEHICLE - May be TOWED OR IMPOUNDED



CVC 473(a)

Two-wheeled motorized device that has a seat or saddle for the use of the rider, and that is not designed or manufactured for highway use. "Pocket bike" does not include an off-highway motorcycle, as defined in section 436.

MOVING

- CVC 21720** May NOT operate on sidewalks, roadway, bicycle/equestrian/hiking/recreational path/trails or public lands.

IMPOUND

- CVC 21721(a)** Pocket bike (Held for Min. 48 hrs)

VEHICLE - May be TOWED OR IMPOUNDED



SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE E-BICYCLE/MOTORCYCLE ENFORCEMENT GUIDE



	PEDAL OPERATED	MAX SPEED (MPH)	MINIMUM AGE (YRS)	DRIVER LICENSE REQUIRED	REGISTRATION/ LICENSE PLATE REQUIRED	HELMET REQUIRED	ALLOWED ON BIKE PATHS/TRAILS	ALLOWED ON SIDEWALK	ALLOWED ON THE ROADWAY
BICYCLE	YES	N/A	N/A	NO	NO	UNDER 18 VC 21212(a)	YES	YES	YES
CLASS 1 E-BIKE	YES	20	N/A	NO	NO	UNDER 18 VC 21212(a)	YES	YES	YES
CLASS 2 E-BIKE	YES	20	N/A	NO	NO	UNDER 18 VC 21212(a)	YES	YES	YES
CLASS 3 E-BIKE	YES	28	16 VC 21213(a)	NO	NO	YES VC 21213(b)	NO ¹ VC 21207.5	YES	YES
MOTORIZED SCOOTER	YES	15	15 ^{1/2}	YES VC 21235(d)	NO	UNDER 18 VC 21235(c)	YES	NO VC 21235(g)	=/> 25 MPH ST UNLESS IN BIKE LN VC 21235(b)
MOPED/MOTORIZED BIKE	YES/NO	N/A	15 ^{1/2}	YES VC 12500(b)	YES VC 4000(a)(1)	YES VC 27803(b)	NO ¹ VC 23127	NO VC 21663	YES
MOTORCYCLE	NO	N/A	15 ^{1/2}	YES VC 12500(b)	YES VC 4000(a)(1)	YES VC 27803(b)	NO VC 23127	NO VC 21663	YES
MOTOR DRIVEN CYCLES	NO	N/A	15 ^{1/2}	YES VC 12500(b)	YES VC 4000(a)(1)	YES VC 27803(b)	NO VC 23127	NO VC 21663	YES
POCKET BIKES	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NO VC 21720	NO VC 21720	NO VC 21720
OFF HIGHWAY MOTORCYCLE	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A	YES VC 38170(b)	YES VC 27803(b)	NO VC 23127	NO VC 21663	NO VC 38025
LOW SPEED VEHICLE VC385.5	NO	25	15 ^{1/2}	YES VC 12500(b)	YES VC 4000(a)(1)	NO	NO VC 23127	NO VC 21663	=/> 35 MPH ST VC 21260
GOLF CART VC345	NO	15	N/A	NO	NO	NO	ONLY IF DESIGNATED	NO VC 21663	=/> 25 MPH ST UNLESS IN BIKE LN VC 21716

¹ Unless local ordinance is adopted authorizing use on trails/paths

TOW AUTHORITIES FOR DL OR REGISTRATION REQUIRED

- CVC 22651(o)(1)** Unregistered/Expired Registration
- CVC 22651(p)** No License Driver Present (Not legally parked)
- CVC 14602.6(a)** Suspended Driver or Never been issued a DL (30 Day Impound)
- CVC 23109.2(a)(1)** Reckless Driving (30 Day Impound)
- CVC 21721(a)** Pocket Bike (Held for Min. 48 hrs.)

OTHER MOTORS VEHICLE VIOLATIONS

- CVC 23103** Reckless Driving - (a) on HWY, (b) Off Street Parking Facility (M)
- CVC 23109(c)** Exhibition of Speed (M)



CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

Motorcycles and Similar Vehicles



Motorcycle

A motorcycle is a motor vehicle that has a seat or saddle for the use of the rider, and is designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground per California Vehicle Code (CVC) 400 (a) and whose motor displaces more than 150 cubic centimeters (150cc).

- Two-wheeled motorcycles require an M-1 endorsement.
- Three-wheeled motorcycles or motorcycles with an attached sidecar require only a Class C driver license per CVC 12804.9.
- A Department of Transportation (DOT) compliant helmet is required.



Motor-driven cycle

A motor-driven cycle is a motorcycle with a motor that displaces less than 150cc per CVC 405.

- Two-wheeled motor-driven cycles require an M-1 endorsement.
- Three-wheeled motor-driven cycles require a Class C driver license.
- A DOT compliant helmet is required.



Moped or motorized bicycle

Section 406(a) CVC refers to a moped or motorized bicycle as any two or three wheeled device having fully operative pedals for propulsion by human power, or having no pedals if powered solely by electrical energy, has an automatic transmission, and a motor which produces less than 4 gross brake horsepower and is capable of propelling the device at a maximum speed of not more than 30 miles per hour on level ground.

- A driver license with an M-1 or M-2 endorsement is required.
- A DOT compliant helmet is required.
- It is unlawful to operate a moped or motorized bicycle on a roadway while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.



Electric Bicycle

An electric bicycle is a bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts, and is categorized by the following:

1. Class 1 electric bicycle is equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 miles per hour.
2. Class 2 electric bicycle is equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle, and that is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 miles per hour.

3. Class 3 electric bicycle is equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 28 miles per hour. This bicycle is equipped with a speedometer.

A person riding an electric bicycle is subject to the same provisions as a person riding a bicycle, as described in Chapter 1 of Division 11, commencing with Section 21200 CVC.

- Must be 16 years of age or older to ride a Class 3 electric bicycle.
- A person under the age of 18 must wear a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet when riding on a public roadway or bikeway.
- It is unlawful to operate an electrically motorized board (hoverboard) on a roadway while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Use may be restricted or prohibited by local ordinance.



Motorized scooter

A motorized scooter is any two-wheeled device that has handlebars and a floorboard that is designed to be stood upon when riding, may have a driver seat that does not interfere with the ability to stand and ride, and is powered by electricity or other power source but may also be designed to be powered by human propulsion. A motorized scooter shall at all times be equipped with a muffler, and the exhaust system shall not be modified to amplify

or increase noise level. The maximum speed limit scooters may be driven is 15 mph, and scooters may be operated on a bicycle path, trail, or bikeway unless prohibited. If operated on a roadway with a posted speed limit greater than 25 mph, scooter must be operated in a Class II bicycle lane. If operated on a roadway with a posted speed limit less than 25 mph, riding in a bicycle lane is not required.

- A Class C driver license or driver permit is required.
- A properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet is required.
- It is unlawful to operate a motorized scooter on a roadway while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.



Electrically motorized board

An electrically motorized board, or hoverboard, is any wheeled device that has a floorboard designed to be stood upon when riding, that is not greater than 60 inches deep and 18 inches wide, and designed to transport only one person. The device has an electric propulsion system averaging less than 1,000 watts, with a maximum speed of no more than

20 miles per hour when powered solely by the propulsion system on a paved level surface. The device may be designed to be powered by human propulsion. The maximum speed an electrically motorized board may be operated is 15 miles per hour, and only on roadways with a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less, unless on a Class II or Class IV bikeway. If operated during darkness the device must be equipped with, or the operator must have attached to their person, a headlamp that emits white light that is visible from 300 feet, a red reflector on the rear that is visible from 500 feet, and white or yellow reflectors on each side visible from 200 feet.

- Operator must be 16 years of age or older.
- A properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet is required when operating on public roadway or bikeway.
- Must not be operated at a speed greater than is reasonable for conditions.
- It is unlawful to operate an electrically motorized board (hoverboard) on a roadway while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Use may be restricted or prohibited by local ordinance.
- A motorized skateboard is not a hoverboard.



Pocket bikes/Mini motorcycles

A pocket bike is a two-wheeled motorized device having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider, that is not designed or manufactured for highway use. A pocket bike does not include an off-highway motorcycle, as defined in CVC 436.

- Operation permitted on private property only.
- Illegal on highways, sidewalks, bikeways, and hiking or recreational trails.

Motorized skateboard

- Operation permitted on private property only.
- Illegal on highways, sidewalks, bikeways and hiking or recreational trails.
- A hoverboard is not a motorized skateboard.





CHP Electric Bicycle Training and Safety

Electric Bicycles (E-Bikes) are a growing trend that allow riders to bike at higher speeds and travel greater distances. With the increase in E-Bike popularity, the need for safety education and training is essential. Click on the link to take the E-Bike training under the “Electric Bicycle Training and Safety” title.

(AB 1946)

Electric Bicycle Safety and Training

Click Here

CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

A banner with a green and blue background. On the left is a white electric bicycle. On the right is a blue section with a yellow lightning bolt icon, the text "(AB 1946) Electric Bicycle Safety and Training", a green "Click Here" button, and the California Highway Patrol logo.

<https://rise.articulate.com/share/yB3Hip8AYzOGdY0dqnd42mQ3k0c6Jza1#/>

Electric Bicycle Safety and Training

START COURSE

ELECTRIC BICYCLE TRAINING

- Introduction
- Definition
- Considerations
- Fitting Your E-Bike
- Proper Equipment and Gear
- Ready to Ride
- Rules of the Road and Bicycle Laws
- Bicycle Crashes in California
- Hazards and How to Avoid Them
- Best Practices
- Test Your Knowledge

A course page for "Electric Bicycle Safety and Training". The top half features a background image of two people riding e-bikes. Below the image is a "START COURSE" button. The bottom half is a list of course modules, each with a hamburger menu icon and a progress indicator (a circle).



ELECTRIC BICYCLE QUICK INFORMATION



Bicycle Class	N/A	Class I	Class II	Class III
CVC Definition	VC 231	VC 312.5(a)(1)	VC 312.5(a)(2)	VC 312.5(a)(3)
Pedal Assisted		●		●
Throttle			●	
Max Speed	Speed Limit	20 mph	20 mph	28 mph
Max Watts	N/A	750 watts	750 watts	750 watts
Minimum Age	None	None	None	16
Driver's License Required	No	No	No	No
Helmet Required	Under 18	Under 18	Under 18	All ages
Helmet Recommended	All ages	All ages	All ages	All ages



Passengers

Only allowed on bikes specifically made for additional rider.



Where to ride

Ride in the same direction as traffic. Use bike lanes when available.

Do not ride on sidewalks or in crosswalks.



Signs & Signals

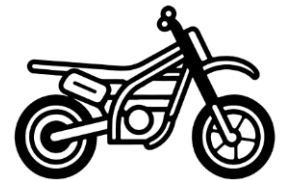
Obey all traffic signs and signals. Come to a complete stop at signs. Look before turning.

NOTE: IT IS AGAINST THE LAW IN CALIFORNIA TO MODIFY OR TAMPER WITH ELECTRIC BICYCLES IN A WAY THAT CHANGES THE SPEED CAPABILITY, UNLESS THE RIDER ALSO CHANGES THE BIKES LABELED CLASSIFICATION PER CVC §24016(d)

CONSULT THE CALIFORNIA VEHICLE CODE AND LOCAL ORDINANCES FOR THE MOST ACCURATE INFORMATION



MOTORIZED BICYCLED & OFF-HIGHWAY MOTORCYCLE QUICK INFORMATION



Bicycle Class	Moped/Motorized Bicycle	Off-Highway Electric Motorcycle
CVC Definition	VC 406	VC 436
Pedal Assisted	Yes/No	Yes/No
Permitted to Drive on Street?	Yes	NO
Watt Information	0 - ~3000 Watts	Usually Over 750 Watts
Minimum Age	16	16 (unless supervised)
Driver's License Required	Yes	Yes* (VC 12501)
Registration Required	Yes	Yes
Helmet Required	Yes	Yes
Max Speed	30 mph	N/A



Where to ride

ONLY a Motorized Bicycle may ride on a public roadway.

OFF-HIGHWAY ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLES MAY ONLY RIDE ON PERMITTED TRAILS AND OFF HIGHWAY VEHICLE (OHV) RECREATION AREAS.



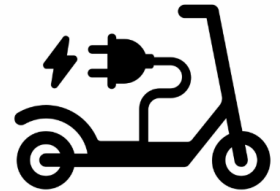
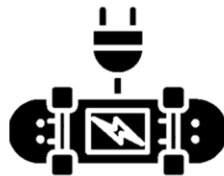
Signs & Signals

Obey all traffic signs and signals. Come to a complete stop at signs. Look before turning.

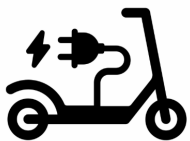
**NOTE: OPERATING AN OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE ON A PUBLIC ROADWAY MAY RESULT IN THE VEHICLE BEING TOWED
CONSULT THE CALIFORNIA VEHICLE CODE AND LOCAL ORDINANCES FOR THE MOST ACCURATE INFORMATION**



MOTORIZED BOARD & MOTORIZED SCOOTER QUICK INFORMATION



Class	Electric Motorized Board	Electric Motorized Scooter
CVC Definition	VC 313.5	VC 407.5
Permitted to Drive on Street?	Highways only 35 MPH/less	Highways only 25 MPH/less*
Permitted to Drive on Sidewalk?	Yes/No	No
Permitted to Drive on Bay Trail?	No	No
Max Speed	20 mph	15 mph
Minimum Age	16	15.5
Driver's License Required	No	Yes
Helmet Required	Under 18	Under 18



Passengers

No passengers are permitted to ride on an Electric Motorized Board or an Electric Motorized Scooter



Where to ride

Ride in the same direction as traffic. Use bike lanes when available.
Do not ride on sidewalks or in crosswalks.



Signs & Signals

Obey all traffic signs and signals. Come to a complete stop at signs. Look before turning.

**NOTE: IF THE MOTORIZED BOARD FALLS OUTSIDE OF PARAMETERS OUTLINED WITHIN ABOVE VEHICLE CODE, IT IS LIKELY AN ELECTRIC SKATEBOARD AND THEY ARE PROHIBITED FOR ROADWAY USE PURSUANT TO CVC §21968
CONSULT THE CALIFORNIA VEHICLE CODE AND LOCAL ORDINANCES FOR THE MOST ACCURATE INFORMATION**

E-BIKES ARE ELECTRIFYING THE FUTURE!

What Parents Should Know...

E-bikes are rapidly increasing in popularity, especially with teens as they provide increased independence. E-bikes allow children to travel further and faster, allowing steep hills to be easily climbed. Heavy school books and sports equipment are no longer an issue to transport! One less vehicle on the road benefits all. But, consider the following...

Is your child experienced enough to manage the increased speeds and maneuverability of a heavy E-bike?

Parents are advised to do their own research and assess their children's cycling capabilities before purchasing an e-bike. Below are some considerations to help parents make informed decisions.

- **E-bikes are heavier and faster than regular bikes**, which makes them harder to control and stop—especially for new riders. This can lead to more serious crashes if not handled carefully.
- The average speed of a **standard bicyclist is 12 mph. Class 1 and 2 e-bikes can travel up to 20 mph (Class 3- 28 mph)**. This is a significant difference when considering the experience level of youth e-bike riders.
- E-bike riders (and all cyclists) **must follow the same rules as vehicles** when riding.

Is your child experienced with the following?

- **Taking turns with vehicles** at intersections after coming to a complete stop
- **Riding predictably with the flow of traffic**, not weaving in and out of vehicles
- Riding **outside of the door zone** – at least 5 feet from parked cars
- Using **hand signals** to turn, stop, and change lanes safely
- Following **speed limits** and being courteous to **pedestrians**
- **Stopping quickly** and avoiding obstacles without swerving into traffic
- **Wearing a helmet** (required for under 18 or any passengers)
- **Staying off their phone** while riding



Riding confidently on roads and pathways takes practice

Parents, or another experienced adult cyclist, are advised to **ride with children** to ensure they are following the rules of the road and can handle cycling in various road conditions. With e-bikes, this includes **extra practice** – riding responsibly and under control at all times, including switching between gears and speed settings.

Information on this flyer is provided courtesy of Marin County Safe Routes to School Program.

Types of E-bikes

Class I

20 mph max with **only pedal-assist**, no throttle. These e-bikes are legal on any paved surface where a regular bike can ride.

Class II

20 mph max with pedal-assist and a powerful **throttle function** that negates the need to pedal. These e-bikes are legal on any paved surface that a regular bike is allowed to operate at the posted speed.

CAUTION! Some vehicles are mislabeled as Class II e-bikes. **Legal e-bikes have:**

1. A motor with a 750 watt max (or less)
2. Safety features that prevent speeds over 20 mph (even with throttle use)
3. Working pedals

*NOTE: Class I and Class II e-bikes **currently don't have a minimum age restriction** and are allowed on multi-use pathways unless otherwise specified.*

Class III

28 mph max, only pedal-assist, no throttle. This class is a tier below true motorcycles and mopeds. Riders must be **16 or older** and **wear a helmet at all times** regardless of age. They are prohibited from multi-use paths unless otherwise specified.

E-Scooter Laws

- Riders need a **learner's permit or driver's license**. E-scooter riders must know traffic laws because they must share the road with vehicles.
- Users can ride in **bike lanes and on roads** where the posted speed limit is 25 mph or slower.
- The speed limit for e-scooters on all roads is **15 mph**, however, many e-scooters are capable of achieving speeds well beyond 15 mph.
- California law **prohibits riding e-scooters on sidewalks and multi use pathways** unless marked otherwise.



Additional Resources

E-Bike Handbook for Parents and Students

- For more details about safety, laws, maintenance, storage, and best riding practices



12-minute E-Bike Safety Video by Pedal Ahead

- An easy to follow introductory video all about e-bike safety



E-Bike Safety Training by CHP

- Expect to spend about an hour on this comprehensive training. Highly recommended that youth complete this training with an adult. Those who complete the course can print out a certificate



Safe Routes to School Website

For questions and further support, please contact srts@smcoe.org.



Information on this flyer is provided courtesy of Marin County SRTS



E-Bikes 101

What Students Need to Know

Presenter Name and Credentials

Date



School Logo Here

Types of E-Bikes

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Pedal Assist	✓	✓	✓
Throttle		✓	
Max Speed	20 mph	20 mph	28 mph
Minimum Age			16 years old
Helmet Required For:	17 and younger	17 and younger	All Ages

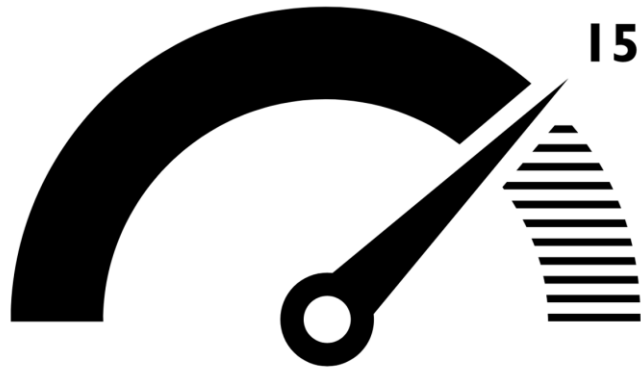
Is your e-bike legal?

1. A motor with a 750 watt max (or less)
2. Safety features that prevent speeds over 20 mph (28 mph for class 3)
3. Working pedals

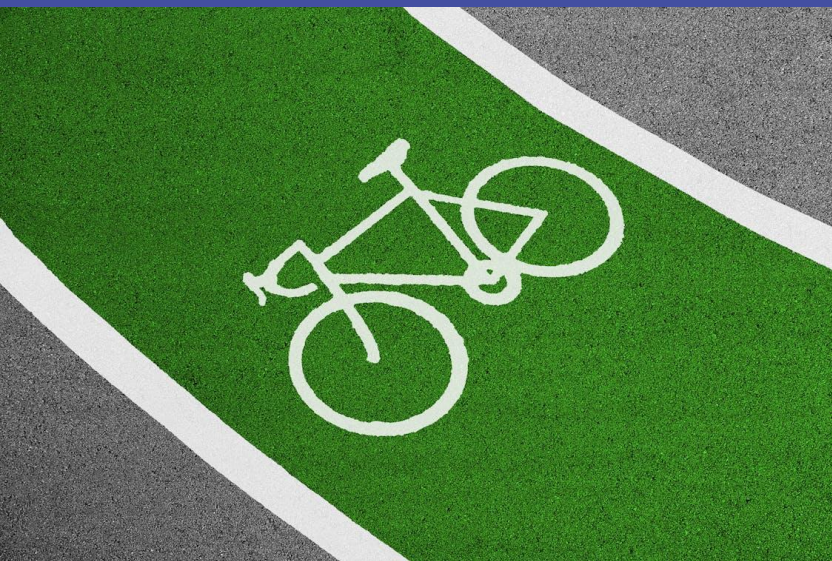


What about e-scooters?

- Driver's license or learner's permit required
- 15 mph speed limit on all roads
- Helmet required if under 18



Where to Ride



- **Class 1 and 2 E-Bikes**
 - Any paved surface where a regular bike can ride
 - Not on sidewalks
- **Class 3 E-Bikes**
 - Any paved surface where a regular bike can ride EXCEPT multi-use paths
 - Not on sidewalks
- **E-Scooters**
 - Bike lanes
 - On the road if the speed limit is 25 mph or less
 - Not on sidewalks or multi-use paths

Ride Safely



- Wear a helmet that fits
 - A loose helmet will not protect you in an accident
- Maintain your ride
 - Replace brake pads often
 - Follow manufacturer's instructions for battery charging
- Wear bright colors and/or reflective materials
- Be predictable
 - Always follow the rules of the road
- Be respectful of slower moving traffic

Additional Resources

[E-Bike Handbook for Parents and Students](#)



[12-minute E-Bike Safety Video](#)

[Free Online E-Bike Safety Training by CHP](#)



[Safe Routes to School Website](#)



Thank you!

