

A STATE OF E-MERGENCY KNOW THE LAW. KNOW THE FACTS.



- E-bikes like the one shown here can safely and affordably provide significant transportation access benefits for many people.
- However, mis-labeled and misunderstood devices capable of much higher speeds (AKA e-motos) are associated with a trend of fatal crashes across the country, particularly involving young people.
- While SEMCOG and its partners advocate for clearer and more effective State laws to improve safety, communities and families need to understand e-bikes, e-motos, how they are different, and how to stay safe.

POWER UP YOUR KNOWLEDGE



NOTE: This guide provides general information to promote understanding and safety related to several electric-powered personal mobility devices (e-bikes and battery-powered mopeds/motorcycles). This is not legal advice and should be used only as a complement to the most up-to-date State and local laws and ordinances.

KNOW MICHIGAN LAW

- E-bikes are bikes, not motor vehicles. People riding electric bicycles (e-bikes)* have the same rights as people riding bicycles.
- Any device exceeding 28 mph (20mph without pedaling) and or powered by > 750 watts is NOT an e-bike; it is a motor vehicle.
- Modifications without replacement of manufacturer label specifying e-bike class are prohibited.



KNOW HOW TO BE SAFE

- Speed is the greatest safety factor

*Observe safe speeds
in all environments*

*In shared spaces, observe
speed of people walking and/or
riding analog bicycles*

- Buyer beware – devices marketed as “e-bikes” often do not fit the legal requirements of e-bikes (classes 1-3) and carry significant safety risks
- Wear the right helmet; high-speed e-motos require motorcycle-grade helmets

*Subject to prohibitions and ordinances of State/local jurisdictions.

THIS IS NOT AN E-BIKE

AND IT IS NOT A CHILD'S TOY



KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEVICES

E-MOTOS (ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLES/DIRT BIKES)

- No functioning pedals
- Motor-powered to higher speeds (Over 28mph)
- Should be treated like gas-powered mopeds/ motorcycles
- Designed for on-road and off-road use
- Not allowed on bike paths or sidewalks
- Must follow motorcycle laws
- Helmet required for riders under age 21
- Requires motorcycle-grade helmet

E-BIKES (ELECTRIC BICYCLES) – CLASSES 1-3

- Legally treated as bicycles
- Fully operational pedals + seat or saddle
- Electric motor (750 watts or less)
- Max assisted speed (class-dependent) = 28mph

All e-bikes fall into
Classes 1-3

	CLASS 1	CLASS 2	CLASS 3
Minimum age?	N/A	N/A	14
Helmet?	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended for all; Required for Ages 14-18
Must pedal to engage motor?	Yes	No	Yes
Maximum speed with motor assist	20mph	20mph	28mph

OUT-OF-CLASS ELECTRIC VEHICLE (OCEV)

- Any motor-powered bicycle that does not meet requirements of Class 1, 2, or 3
- Maximum assisted speed above limits
- Motor power over 750 watts
- Throttles to over 20mph
- Includes electric-powered devices such as scooters, motorcycles, mopeds, ORVs