ELECTRIC ASSISTED BICYCLES

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Electric assisted bicycles, known colloquially as "e-bikes," are gaining popularity around the country. When you ride an e-bike, you're riding with power, but as the saying goes, with great power comes great responsibility. Before purchasing a device, it's important to know what you're buying and the laws associated with its operation.

WHAT IS AN E-BIKE?

Effective December 1, 2026, North Carolina defines an electric assisted bicycle as a bicycle that is equipped with a seat, **fully operable pedals** for human propulsion, an electric motor of **no more than 750 watts**, that meets the requirements of one of the following three classes:

ELECTRIC ASISSTED BICYCLE (E-BIKE) CLASSES

CLASS 1:
- Max. speed 20 MPH
- Pedal assist

CLASS 2:
- Max. speed 20 MPH
- Throttle assist

CLASS 3:
- Max. speed 28 MPH
- Pedal assist

NOT AN ELECTRIC ASSISTED BICYCLE (E-BIKE)

IF IT:
- Exceeds 750 Watts,
- Goes over 28 MPH, OR
- Does not have pedals

Any vehicle that does not fit the state legal definition above may not legally be considered an e-bike. **While these devices may look similar or even be advertised as e-bikes, the law may recognize them as mopeds or motorcycles**.

WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

While state law allows electric assisted bicycles on all roadways, bicycle lanes, and multiuse paths, local municipalities and counties have the ability to regulate where and how e-bikes are allowed on multiuse paths and sidewalks. Always check the rules before you head out!

Remember, devices that do not meet the legal definition of an e-bike may not be allowed on multiuse paths or trails. Laws governing the use of mopeds or motorcycles may also come into play for these devices, so it's important to know what you're riding and the associated regulations.

E-BIKE SAFETY

The safe use and operation of e-bikes is essential to the safety of e-bicyclists and those around them. Always wear a helmet, stay visible, obey traffic laws, and ride at reasonable speeds. Follow North Carolina and local laws every ride, every time.



Yield to pedestrians, pass slowly.


Stay visible.


Warn others when passing.


Always wear a helmet.


Obey all traffic laws.


Put down electronic devices.

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