

IOWA'S ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW



IOWA'S ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW FOR THE ROAD

- » Electric bicycles are regulated like bicycles. The same rules of the road apply to both electric bicycles and human-powered bicycles.
- » Electric bicycles are not subject to the registration, licensing, or insurance requirements that apply to motor vehicles.
- » Iowa designates three classes of electric bicycles:
 - » Class 1: Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 20 mph.
 - » Class 2: Bicycle equipped with a throttle-actuated motor, that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 20 mph.

- » Class 3: Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 28 mph.
- » Persons under 16 years of age may not operate a Class 3 electric bicycle but they may ride as a passenger.
- » People riding Class 3 electric bicycles on bicycle or multi-use paths must not exceed the posted speed limit, or if there is no posted speed limit, 20 miles per hour.
- » Electric bicycles are allowed on bicycle or multi-use paths. However, local governments may restrict the use of electric bicycles on paths. When in doubt, check with your town, city, or county for local rules and regulations.

* The following Iowa laws are referenced: Iowa Code § 321.1.

eMTB GUIDELINES

- » On federal, state, county and local trails, e-mountain bike (eMTB) access varies significantly.
- » Generally, any natural surface trail that is designated as open to both motorized and non-motorized uses is also open to eMTBs.
- » eMTBs may not be allowed on trails managed for non-motorized activities.
- » Do not ride your eMTB in areas where the local rules are unclear. Ride legally and only on authorized trails to show that mountain bikers are responsible trail users.
- » When in doubt, ask your local land manager about access to specific trails. Local land rules change frequently.

IOWA'S ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW FOR TRAILS

- » LOCAL: Consult your local land management agency.
- » STATE: The Iowa Department of Natural Resources does not currently have an eMTB policy. Contact the department for the most up to date information. PeopleForBikes is monitoring this policy and will update this document as needed.
- » FEDERAL: There is little federal land managed for recreation in Iowa. However, for reference, eMTBs are considered motorized vehicles and have access to motorized trails on managed by the Forest Service. Electric bicycles are considered a non-motorized use on lands managed by the Department of the Interior, but they are only permitted in non-motorized areas that have been designated as open to electric bicycles.

CHECK OUT

- » A map of great eMTB rides at peopleforbikes.org/emtb
- » eMTB "Adventures" at peopleforbikes.org/e-bikes

GREAT eMTB RIDES IN IOWA

- » **Grimes Gravel Loop**
Des Moines | 36 miles
- » **Grinnel Gravel Lake Loop**
Grinnel | 24 miles

With an electric bicycle, bicyclists can ride more often, farther, and for more trips.

Electric bicycles are designed to be as safe as traditional bicycles, do not compromise consumer safety, and benefit bicyclists who may be discouraged from riding a traditional bicycle due to limited physical fitness, age, disability or convenience.

In many states, electric bicycles are regulated under antiquated laws primarily aimed at combustion engine vehicles such as mopeds or scooters. PeopleForBikes is clarifying state laws governing the use of electric bicycles in the U.S. Every state's law is different, but the objective is to ensure that low-speed electric bicycles are regulated similarly to traditional, human-powered bicycles.



Learn more at PeopleForBikes.org/e-bikes

- » Blogs and webinars
- » Buying guide
- » Electric bicycle laws around the country
- » Retailer materials
- » Electric bicycle statistics and research
- » eMTB management resources