



## **Electric Bicycles and Electric Motorbikes: Not all “e-Bikes” are the same!**

The Village of Ashwaubenon has recently had increased contact with young riders operating electric motorbikes on village streets. This presents an opportunity to clarify the rules and explain the difference between electric bicycles and electric motorbikes.

[Electric bicycles are defined under Wisconsin law](#) and Village ordinance as bicycles with operable pedals and an electric motor that provides assistance. Electric bicycles must be registered with the Village if they are customarily kept here, and riders are required to follow traffic laws. Riders under age 16 must wear a helmet.

Electric motorbikes are different. Many of the devices being sold and marketed as “e-bikes” are actually electric motorbikes. These are motor vehicles under state law. Because of that, they must be registered with the Wisconsin Department of Motor Vehicles, insured, and operated only by licensed drivers. If a device cannot be legally registered with the DMV, it may not be operated on Village streets, sidewalks, trails, or other public property.

Recently, Public Safety officers stopped several juveniles riding electric motorbikes on village streets. Citations were issued for violations including operating an unregistered motor vehicle, operating without a valid driver’s license, and other related offenses. Enforcement actions are guided by Village ordinance and state law, with officers using their judgment based on age, behavior, and safety concerns.

These rules are not about limiting recreation. They are about safety. Electric motorbikes are heavier, faster, and accelerate more quickly than electric bicycles. We have seen recent crashes, both locally and in other communities, involving electric motorbikes that have resulted in serious injuries. Young riders are especially vulnerable when operating high-powered devices in traffic or around pedestrians.

Parents and guardians should carefully review the type of device a child is riding and understand how it is legally classified. If it does not meet the definition of an electric bicycle, it may not be legal for use in the Village.

The Village encourages residents to contact the [Public Safety Department](#) if they have questions about whether a specific device is allowed and what rules apply. Our goal is to keep riders, pedestrians, and drivers safe while making sure everyone understands the law.

*Village of Ashwaubenon*  
2155 Holmgren Way, Ashwaubenon, WI 54304  
P: 920.492.2301 F: 920.492.2328  
**ashwaubenon.gov**